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# BETTER DAYS FOR WORKING PEOPLE

BY

W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., F.R.S.E.

SEVENTY SECOND THOUSAND.

ANDER STRAEMAN, PUBLISHER  
106, STRAND, LONDON

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# BETTER DAYS

FOR

## WORKING PEOPLE

BY

WILLIAM GARDEN BLAIKIE, D.D., F.R.S.E.

"Admirable! the Christian religion, which seems only to have for its object the felicity of another life, secures also our happiness in this."—MONTESQUIEU.

*SEVENTY-SECOND THOUSAND*

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TO ALL  
EATING THEIR BREAD IN THE SWEAT  
OF THEIR BROW  
WHO  
IN THE BATTLE OF LIFE  
FIGHT BRAVELY, ENDURE MANFULLY  
AND  
OVERCOME.



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## BETTER DAYS FOR WORKING PEOPLE.

### CHAPTER I.—WHAT TO AIM AT.

"We believe it to be in reserve for society, that workmen will at length share more equally than they do at present, with capitalists and proprietors of the soil, in the comforts and even the elegancies of life. But this will not be the achievement of desperadoes: it will be come at through a more peaceful medium—through the medium of a growing worth and a growing intelligence among the people."—CHALMERS.

A GREAT champion of the rights of Labour lately proclaimed—"Life to the working man is a ceaseless degradation, a daily martyrdom, a funeral procession to the grave." When we read this statement, we could not help thinking of the story of the man whose friends conspired to convince him that he was dying. The man was in excellent health; but walking one day along the street, he met a friend who, looking him hard in the face, exclaimed with startled look and tone, "Dear me, how very ill you are looking!" In the next street he met another friend, who held up his hands, and declared himself shocked at his frightful appearance. Round the

next corner a third friend met him with a similar expression of horror. Feebler and feebler each time waxed the poor man's assurance that he was perfectly well. Before he got home he was convinced that he must be extremely ill; and the story goes, that he took to his bed and died.

Those who would persuade the working men of Britain that their life is a daily martyrdom, a funeral procession to the grave, are practising a similar trick on their credulity, and rousing their imagination to make them miserable. It is not very difficult to make out a plausible case. It is easy to dwell upon the hardships of the working man. With hard work and little for it; long hours and long exposure; a poor dwelling and a heavy rent; with employment often, that like the stone-cutter's or the steel-grinder's is very unhealthy, or like the scavenger's or the miner's, disagreeable and offensive; enjoying no political power and little social influence; exposed to sickness without comforts, and to old age without alleviations; doomed sometimes to look on the illness of wife or child, and feel that the comforts that might restore them are utterly beyond reach; forced to continue this drudgery and carry this burden from childhood to old age with hardly a hope of relief—here certainly are many ugly elements, out of which it is not difficult to

make a very dark picture. Any one wishing to convince the working classes that their life is "a ceaseless degradation, a daily martyrdom, a funeral procession to the grave," has only to work up these things into a vivid picture, excluding every brighter element, and deepening the dark ones to the gloomiest possible shade. A working man, coming under the spell of such an artist, will soon be in the position of the poor man whom his friends beguiled into the belief that he was dying ; he may have thought himself well enough before, and been contented and happy ; now all is changed ; his spirits sink, his energies are paralysed ; he is a martyr where martyrdom has not even a chance of a crown—of all men most miserable.

Almost every life has a dark side, and every man by dwelling on it may convince himself that he is a martyr. A little while ago, an article appeared in the *Times* on the miseries of dukes. All that could contribute to worry the life of a rich nobleman was elaborately set out ; all the business he had to transact, the servants he had to control and watch, the plans he had to form, the improvements he had to superintend, the contracts he had to sanction, the perplexities he had to adjust, the abuse he had to endure. On reading it, one could understand how even a duke might come to believe that his life

was little better than a daily martyrdom, a funeral procession to the grave. Only last year a young man died in England, the grandson of Lord Byron, the holder of one peerage, and the heir of another, who had deliberately preferred to live and die as a workman in an iron-foundry, rather than take his place in the House of Lords, and enjoy what seemed to him the uncomfortable honours of the peerage. Within the last few months, we have seen the classic crown of Greece going a-begging, as if the sentiments of Richard II. on the pleasures of royalty had become the universal creed—

“Let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings :—  
How some have been deposed, some slain in war,  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed ;  
Some poison’d by their wives, some sleeping killed ;  
All murder’d ; for within the hollow crown  
That rounds the mortal temples of the king,  
Keeps Death his court ; and there the antic sits  
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp ;  
Allowing him a breath, a little scene  
To monarchize, be fear’d, and kill with looks ;  
Infusing him with self, and vain conceit,—  
As if this flesh which walls about our life  
Were brass impregnable ; and humour’d thus  
Comes at the last, and with a little pin  
Bores through his castle-walls, and—farewell king !”

As the proverb says, “there is a skeleton in every house ;” or, as we have heard it expressed, simply

and plaintively, "*there's aye a something.*" A peep behind the scenes of high life would astonish many a one. That merchant prince, whom his poor clerk, with eighty pounds a year, looks up to as a demigod, as he walks majestically through the counting-house—why, at this moment, he may be wishing himself a clerk, a porter in his own office—anything that would free him from the misery that is burning out his heart—his silent but hopeless struggle with coming bankruptcy. That nobleman that rolls proudly past you in his chariot, as you are walking with your children,—perhaps he is thinking that he would not grudge half his acres, if only, like you, he had a son to come after him. Working men, as we call them technically, must not claim a monopoly of martyrdom; they must not fancy that there are no crowns and coronets in the funeral procession to the grave.<sup>1</sup>

Still it is true, as a general rule, that the working classes have a very heavy share of the more common burdens of life, much more heavy than others, and that they are very liable, when great pains are not

<sup>1</sup> The story is told of a nobleman, that on one occasion he took a visitor to the top of a hill, commanding a noble view, and told him that he was the proprietor of every acre which he saw. "What a happy man you must be!" was the visitor's remark. "Happy!" returned the nobleman, "in all that wide expanse which you behold, there is not a single hamlet that contains so utterly wretched a man!"

taken to the contrary, to be crushed and broken down by these burdens,—in fact, to be ruined by them, or rather through them, both physically and morally. They are especially ill-fitted to stand a great strain, they are terribly shaken, as regards their outward condition, by the pressure of a great public calamity, like that which Lancashire has had to bear. Certainly the condition of the working man is not what the Christian philanthropist would like. It is not the most favourable for his either getting the most good, or doing the most good,—for his fulfilling in the best manner the high ends of his creation. In general, he carries too much weight. He is apt to get lame in the race, to lose heart, to lose self-respect, and to lie down because he can run no longer. The moment he is down, enemies rush on him and master him,—laziness, drunkenness, lying, and vices whose name is legion. We wish to do our humble part in encouraging the working man to bear his burdens. We would gladly lessen them, if we could ; but if we cannot lessen them, we may at least suggest to him how he may bear them more easily. Some people say, Hard toil is the dispensation of Providence ; and it is vain, if not impious, to strive against it. Yet is not Providence ever encouraging us to find out *ways of lessening labour and of lightening burdens*, and is it vain

or impious to resort to them? Is it impious to use the mechanical powers? Is it impious to whisk up that truck of coal at the ship-side with the steam-crane, tumble its contents in half a minute into the hold, and save human bone and muscle hours of exhausting labour? Sickness is a dispensation of Providence—is it impious to take medicine? The fact is, it is an act and duty of piety to avail ourselves of all lawful means of lightening the burdens of life, and to be ever trying to find out those which are not already known. True, we are to “be content with such things as we have;” that is, we must not grumble, nor get soured, nor envious, even when we are much oppressed; but, at the same time, we may, we must use all lawful methods for bettering our condition, even in a temporal point of view. We believe this to be not merely a permissive, but an imperative law of our being. It is an utterly false humility that spares any kind of preventable evil. It is a duty to God, to ourselves, to our children, and to society, to get rid, as far as we can, of all that hurts and destroys. We wish, in this spirit, to encourage working men to seek for better days. We wish them to aim at more comfort, less work, better houses, better education, higher social standing. We don't wish to make them dissatisfied, or to awaken or inflame their jealousy towards those

who are better off. We don't wish to see them in such luxury as shall tempt them to forget that they are but "strangers and pilgrims here." We don't wish their life so changed as that it shall no longer furnish that noble spur to industry, and that inestimable training in habits of self-denial and regularity, which are among the highest fruits of a life of labour. What we desire is to point them to ways and methods of lightening and brightening labour, or of increasing the strength to bear it, which God has provided for them, but of whose existence many of them are ignorant. As the angel showed Hagar the well in the wilderness, so would we point out to working men wells, both temporal and spiritual, that may refresh their spirits amid their daily toils. We are stimulated to this, not only by the hope of benefiting by far the most numerous class of the community ; but also by the belief, that in proportion as we succeed, we shall be furnishing them with fresh proofs of God's love and care, and calling forth, we trust, from them, fresh tributes to Him of gratitude and trust.

For one who unfurls to the working classes the banner "Excelsior," it is a great matter to be able to remind them, that in this country, for centuries past, the tide on the whole has been running in their favour. In the early period of our history they

were slaves or serfs, and the struggles of emancipation were long and hard. Even since the Reformation, it is not easy to describe the progress that has been made by them in the comforts of life, nor the contrast which, with all our deficiencies, the social state of our country to-day presents to the "good old times." In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the houses of the common people in England, like some yet to be seen in parts of Ireland and the Highlands, were built of mud and wood, thatched with straw, and consisted of one room, with no chimney, but only an opening in the roof. The utensils were mostly of wood ; glass was scarce, and pottery almost unknown. The bedding consisted of straw pallets, or rough mats, covered only by a sheet and coarse coverlet, with a good round log instead of a bolster or pillow. The food of labourers and workmen was horse corn, beans, pease, oats, tares, and lentils. In the early reign of Henry VIII., it has been said that not a cabbage, carrot, turnip, or other edible root grew in England. Pins were not introduced from France to England till 1543, previous to which even royal ladies had to use ribbons, clasps, and skewers of brass, silver, gold, ivory, bone, or wood. In the seventeenth century, the state of the country was still very backward. As Lord Macaulay has shown, in the first volume of his History, the

wages of operatives were not then more than half what they are now. In 1680, a member of the House of Commons complained, that owing to the high wages paid to our mechanics, this country was unable to compete with the looms of India; instead of slaving all day, like the natives of Bengal, for a piece of copper, our operatives demanded the enormous sum of one shilling a day! In the time of Charles II., the weavers of Norwich and Leeds complained that they could not earn more than sixpence a day—all that they wished being a shilling. Agricultural labourers had, on an average, in England not more than five shillings a week, and in Scotland, which was a poorer country, they had less. Children were put out to labour as soon as they could earn a penny—in some cases so early as at the age of six. The necessaries of life were not cheaper than now. In 1661, the price of wheat was seventy shillings a quarter, consequently wheat bread was almost unknown at the table of operatives. Animal food was indeed cheaper, but too dear for the working classes. Tropical and manufactured goods cost more money than now; so did salt, sugar, coals, candles, soap, shoes, stockings, and most other kinds of clothing; and the clothing was not only dearer, but of less durable quality.

Even during the present century, the condition of

the labouring classes has made a decided advance. In the year 1800, the wages of a good mason in London are stated to have been but sixteen shillings a week; now they are upwards of thirty. In Manchester and neighbouring towns during the last twenty years wages have increased in almost every department, while the period of labour has decreased. In the cotton manufacture, for example, the average increase of wages (before the derangement of the cotton famine) had been about twenty per cent., and the decrease of time employed in working had been nine hours a week. In the iron districts, the increase of pay has been still greater. From a statement of wages paid in a large iron manufactory in the north of England, it has been shown by Mr. Smiles, that in very favourable times, "rail-rollers" are able to earn a rate of daily pay equal to that of lieutenant-colonels in her Majesty's foot-guards; "shinglers" equal to that of majors of foot; and "furnacemen" equal to that of lieutenants and adjutants. These instances of increase are no doubt the most striking to be found; and there are some employments in which no increase at all has taken place. Some of the necessaries of life cost more money now than then; but owing to the reduction of taxes, and the smaller cost of producing manufactured goods, many of them are cheaper. So far,

therefore, the condition of the working classes has decidedly improved.

In a variety of other ways, the situation of working men is better now than it was. Hospitals and dispensaries in our large towns are but of modern origin, and, by universal acknowledgment, are a great boon to working men. The poorer food and poorer clothing of the people in former times exposed them to frightful ravages from epidemic diseases, which sometimes swept multitudes off in a frightful manner, beyond anything known in modern times. A more savage spirit seems to have pervaded social relations; blows and force were the only treatment practised on the insane; schoolmasters had little idea of instilling learning but by the lash; it was not thought very bad in husbands to strike their wives; and employers, when it suited them, were accustomed to beat their workmen. Add to this, that the working classes had far less opportunity of making their grievances known, and from their smaller numbers, their inferior social importance, and their less developed powers, were much less attended to when they did; and it can hardly fail to be seen that the last two centuries have witnessed a great change for the better in the condition of the British workman.

It is no real contradiction to the view now ad-

vanced, that there was more merriment, and more merry-making, in the old times than there is now. The May-pole gathered many a group of laughing faces and joyous hearts round it, to greet the advance of summer, and high and low forgot their cares to join in the festivities of Yule. But while, without doubt, there is something or another missing in this respect at the present time; while there is, in our social arrangements, a want of scope for that love of fun and humour which God has planted in our nature, and which, being implanted by God, is a thing to be regulated, not destroyed,—it would be a great mistake to suppose that, because people are now of a more sombre spirit, they have less enjoyment, or less means of enjoyment, than before. Hugh Miller, in referring to the abounding gaiety that prevailed among a gang of masons with whom he once worked, in a miserable Highland barrack, while in their secret hearts the poor fellows were sorely missing the joys of home, remarks : “ It has been long known that gaiety is not enjoyment; but that gaiety should indicate little else than the want of solid enjoyment, is a circumstance not always suspected. My experience of barrack-life has enabled me to receive, without hesitation, what has been said of the occasional merriment of slaves in America and elsewhere, and fully to credit the oft-repeated state-

ment, that the abject serfs of despotic governments laugh more than the subjects of a free country."<sup>1</sup>

But notwithstanding the undoubted and manifold change for the better in the condition of the British workman, the improvement is not so great as might have been looked for. The condition of workmen ought to have improved in a double ratio; but it has improved only in a single one. In the first place, it ought to have improved with the increasing wealth and comfort of the nation at large. While landowners were receiving larger rents, lawyers and physicians larger fees, manufacturers and tradesmen more ample profits, it was but just that workmen should have larger wages. But besides this, their condition ought to have improved in proportion to the increased importance of their skill and labour to the nation at large. Two centuries ago, the number of non-agricultural operatives in Britain was but a trifle to the number now, and they did not contribute in any very marked degree to the prosperity of the country. Now, they form, with their families, half the community, and are one of the great springs of its prosperity and wealth. It is within the last two centuries that British workmen have acquired such skill in almost every department; that British manufactures have obtained so high a character, and

<sup>1</sup> *Schools and Schoolmasters*, p. 184.

secured the preference in almost every market; and that British ships, carrying forth our productions to every country in the globe, have poured upon us in return the wealth and merchandise of every clime. Considering these things, it might have been expected that the working classes should have risen to a corresponding place in the social scale. It is an undoubted fact that they have not obtained that place. They have no direct voice as yet in the government of the country; their houses are frequently of a most miserable kind; and it is only within the last few years that attention has been turned to the necessity of so providing for the healthfulness of districts where they cluster, as to prevent their being mowed down in scores and hundreds by the ravages of disease. To ascribe these things to the fault of any one class of the community is neither true in fact nor expedient in policy. When the lower classes rail against the higher as the cause of their sufferings, the higher are tempted to recriminate, by pointing to the intemperance, the improvidence, the strifes and strikes, which exist among the lower. Amid such railings and recriminations, whoever may be right or wrong, the cause of amendment makes little progress. It is far better policy to try to unite all classes in a general movement towards improvement; and if there be any signs of penitence

among the upper ranks for their long neglect of the lower, good is far more likely to come out of it when the working classes show themselves intent on their own improvement, than if they take up an attitude of fierce and dogged opposition. Every year shows more clearly the spread of an interest among the upper classes in the condition of the lower. The labours of men like the late Prince Consort and Lord Shaftesbury, and of ladies like Miss Marsh or Mrs. Bayly, are a sign of the times. Our very novels, devoted so often to the working classes, show a marvellous contrast to the time when the poet Gray, in his famous elegy, had to make a sort of apology for introducing so humble a subject :—

“ Let not ambition mock their useful toils,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;  
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,  
The short but simple annals of the poor.”

May such examples as have already been set be followed by thousands, and may we soon see, in all directions, a due share of regard to the CLAIMS OF LABOUR !

In trying to stimulate our working friends to seek for better days, we will not waste time in inquiring what ought to be done for them by others ; our purpose is rather to urge some things which they may do for themselves.

The first matter to which we ask attention, as furnishing a field for improvement, is the SOCIAL COMFORT of working people ; and we begin with this, not because it is the most important, but because it is the least. Still, in its place, it is not to be overlooked. We think they are entitled and bound to seek a more comfortable and civilized mode of life than many of them enjoy. We should like, for example, that the industrious workman, in indifferent health, should never be compelled to drag himself from a sick-bed, and return to toil for which he is unfit, and which in the end must aggravate his disease, and shorten his life. We should like that the working man's wife did not require to toil, as she often does, to a degree that breaks down her health, and crushes the elastic spring of her mind, and that, too, at seasons when it is specially desirable that she should be in vigorous health. We should like that the working man's child did not require to be put out to labour at an age at which, even though he may have been unusually diligent at school, he can have acquired nothing beyond the mere rudiments of education. To secure all such results, *many* agencies are required. In considering to what the prevailing discomfort is due, it must not be forgotten that in very many cases the blame must be laid on the thoughtlessness, the wastefulness, and the

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flagrant vice of the persons themselves. Foremost in the list of the working man's curses is intemperance, and the utter break-down of the whole machinery of his moral nature which it commonly brings. The indispensable remedy here is of course sobriety, steadiness, economy, forethought. Without these, any attempts at improved comfort would be as sure to be thrown away as the cartloads of wholesome instruction that were emptied into the Slough of Despond. Probably some of our readers have seen a document showing what might be purchased with the fifty or sixty millions sterling that are spent annually upon stimulants by the working classes in this country. Besides churches, and schools, and missions far beyond the present number, the list shows no end of houses that might be built, and suits of clothes provided, and beds, and blankets, and books, and bibles, and everything of the kind that helps to make a comfortable home. How often have we heard the wife of the unsteady workman declare, with streaming eyes—perhaps with a little of the exaggeration natural in the circumstances—that if they only had all that he earned, no family need be more comfortable in all the town !

Still, we are quite ready to admit that *individual* effort of this sort, however much good it may accomplish in thousands of cases, will not altogether

solve the problem. There is need for *united* effort too. The masses of this country have discovered the great value of union, but as yet they are only groping in the dark for the best way to exercise it and use it. As for the method to which recourse has so often been had, and on which so much reliance has been placed for this end—trades' unions and combinations—we shall only say at present that, apart from the *moral* bearings of the subject, the tendency of this system appears to us to be one of the most difficult questions in social economy, and that there is much to be said on both sides of it; but that even the warmest friends of this method will probably admit that as yet they are but feeling their way towards the best plan of securing for labour the strength that is derived from union. The working classes, we believe, have caught sight of something far more productive of palpable and immediate benefit in the principle of *co-operation*, which has achieved such marvellous results at Rochdale, and other towns in England. We would not counsel the abandonment of the one, because we conceive, that with modifications, trades' unions may work for good; but we would counsel the effective prosecution of the other—we mean the method of co-operation. It calls into activity many valuable qualities and many excellent habits; and where these qualities

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and habits are found, it gives fair promise of guiding the families of the people, under God's blessing, if not to a land flowing with milk and honey, at least a good way towards its borders.

In considering how best the earnings, and with them the social comfort of working men may be increased, the subject of *health* demands a passing notice. On this subject, popular ideas may be said to be undergoing a sort of revolution. Health has long been looked on as a blessing over which people themselves have little or no control. Disease has been regarded as a capricious visitant that floats and flutters where she will, and whose attacks, when unhappily they are inflicted, can only be met by a due application of doctors' drugs. Light is breaking in on our notions on these subjects. To a very large extent we begin to find that disease is not so capricious as we thought, and that we possess, if we choose, a great power of holding her down. By means that are very simple, and within the reach of all, it is now found, that with God's blessing, many maladies may be wholly averted, and the attacks of others greatly lightened. The plentiful use of fresh air and water and light, simple and wholesome diet, regular exercise, and refreshing rest, are found to be far more efficient weapons in the conflict with disease than all the drugs that have ever been

manufactured. These measures are like the Volunteers—they tend to keep off the enemy; drugs are like the regular army—needful for the actual conflict. It needs not to be said of what benefit to the man who earns his bread in the sweat of his brow a state of vigorous health must be. Not only may the days and weeks of sickness be saved, but all through other days there will be a fulness of strength and an elasticity of spirit which will go far to lighten the burden, as well as to increase the gains of toil. It may seem to some that the effects of this element will be hardly appreciable in any plan of raising the condition of the masses; our conviction is quite the opposite—its influence, we believe, will ultimately be found to be very great.

When the social condition of workmen is discussed in general society, one often hears the opinion expressed, that if they had higher wages they would only become more dissipated, and that if they had a higher social position, it would only make them insolent. A degree of plausibility is given to this argument by the fact, that in many cases where very high wages are earned, pay-day brings with it a sort of Pandemonium, and that the comfort at home seems to be in the inverse ratio to the amount of the wages. In the mining and coal districts, families in which there are several workers often

receive wages in all of four, five, or even six pounds a week,—amounting in a year to more than the salary of many a doctor and clergyman. Yet there are cases of this sort in which the whole furniture of the house would be a dear purchase at thirty shillings! The writer has himself witnessed a room in a mining village, in which three whole families and one lodger lived, whose united earnings were upwards of £200 a year, and yet, though they were not drunkards when he saw them, none of them seemed to have the faintest idea of management; they had no elevated tastes; unmitigated hugger-mugger was their element. The gift of Midas—the power to turn everything to gold—would of itself be as great a curse to the working classes now, as it was to the King of Phrygia of old. Worthy old Mr. Shirra of Kirkcaldy had some reason to pray that God would “either give the folk o’ Kirkcaldy less siller, or mair wit to guide it.” We should deplore a process that would only increase the earnings of the working classes, without a parallel advance on their part in intelligence and worth. Let the two movements advance alongside of each other, and all will be well.

Therefore, we say in the second place, seek to advance in respect of *intelligence*. It would take a whole essay to tell the benefits which this will bring.

We do not speak merely of the many cases,—such as that of Hugh Miller or of George Stephenson,—where a mind diligently cultivated has carried the working man into another sphere of society altogether, because the thing to be desired is not merely that individuals may rise above the general platform, but that the platform itself be raised. We would therefore ask you to observe how intelligence in a workman procures *respect*. We mean, when it is not marred by conceit or immorality, or other obnoxious quality, and when it does not carry him above his proper business, but makes him more able and skilful in it. Further, intelligence opens up many *new pleasures* to the working man. It is because he has so few pleasures, except those of a low animal kind, that the uncultivated workman is so apt to be caught by the coarsest bait the devil can put upon his hooks. Our lowest capacities of enjoyment don't depend on cultivation at all, but our highest do. The cultivated workman has capacities of enjoyment to which the uncultivated is dead. What pleasure may his books give him during the spare evening hour, or his paint-brush, or his flute. With hammer in hand he may go forth on his half-holiday, to search among the rocks for the creatures of an earlier world, or accompanied by his children, acquaint them, as well as himself, with the thousand

objects of interest that God has strewn by the roadside or the sea-shore. Then again, a spirit of intelligence or thirst for mental improvement among the working classes would increase greatly the *intellectual wealth* of the nation, both by elevating the whole platform, as we have just said, and by bringing forward those who have got from God the capacity to excel. Is there any ground for doubt, that among the working classes there is as much of the seeds or elements of mental power, as in any other order of society? Hitherto, with a few bright exceptions, the leading minds of the world have been drawn from the upper classes,—our great philosophers, historians, poets, statesmen, and so forth. Occasionally, minds of unwonted vigour and power have burst through the disadvantages of their situation, and

“Flamed in the forehead of the morning sky;”  
but the more that intellectual culture is extended to all ranks of the community, the greater likelihood is there of such gifted minds being discovered and drawn out—of “village Hampdens” being placed where they may rally a community, and “mute inglorious Miltos” finding a voice to which the world will listen.

In the view of these and other things, the subject of *popular or national education* ought to excite a

very lively interest in the minds of working men. It is indeed singular that there should be so little interest among them on this subject. They seem almost everywhere content to take schools and teachers just as they find them; glad when they get them good; disappointed, but helpless, when they happen to be bad. It would be difficult to over-value the influence which a thoroughly good system of national education must have on the intellectual elevation of future generations of the working classes, or to overstate the real interest which they have in everything that bears on elementary teaching,—commodious schoolrooms, well-trained and well-stimulated teachers, skilful inspectors, superior lesson-books, all manner of happy devices for promoting the vigour, the cheerfulness, the ardour of the scholars. Subsidiary to such a system, but very useful in their own way, are apprentice schools and evening classes. We fear it will be long ere such institutions cease to be needed. Certainly there are multitudes of young men now, who, if they could only be induced to believe it, would be infinitely the better of the apprentice school. Unhappily, the Hector M'Neils are the exception, not the rule. Hector M'Neil was a lad, engaged some years ago as a labourer four miles out of Edinburgh, who showed such anxiety to attend the evening school,

that, in order to do so, he took lodgings in town, walked eight miles every day to and from his work, in the coldest season of the year, amid the frost and snow of winter, and was never once absent from school during a period of three months. Scotland, as long as it is Scotland, will never cease to furnish many striking instances of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties ; we only wish the thirst for intellectual culture were so universal, that no man, wishing to be counted a man, would be content to want it.

Last, but certainly not least, we would have the working classes to aim very steadily and earnestly at religious and moral elevation. We have placed this last in the order of enumeration, but let it ever be first in the order of practice. The starting-point in *this* race of improvement is a right relation to God. Rather, we may say, the starting-point in every course where solid and lasting improvement is to be found is a right relation to God. Suppose you bring a *watch*, in a very shattered state, to be repaired ; its screws are loose, its wheels are bent, it is very dirty, and its mainspring is broken. What would you think of the watchmaker, if, after tightening the screws, evening the wheels, and cleaning the whole, he should deliver the watch to you with the mainspring still broken ? Would it be worth the taking back ? But a watch, with its mainspring

broken, is just like a soul separated from God. Reconciliation to our Maker, fellowship with our Father in heaven, is the first step to solid and enduring improvement. Never let us reverse the order established by Him who spake as never man spake—"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The Son of Man has come into the world to seek and to save that which is lost. If you receive Him in faith and love, you get the germ of all salvation, temporal and eternal; if you refuse Him, you turn your back upon all true good.

Moral and spiritual excellence is the highest of all excellence, and it has often been realized, to a remarkable degree, in the persons and families of working men. It was in the person of a working man that "the brightness of God's glory" was manifested among men,—one of whom his enemies were wont to ask, Is not this the carpenter? To this inheritance, the highest of all, not many rich men, not many noble, not many mighty after the flesh are called; but the poor have this gospel preached unto them. Here, then, is a path of progress, at least as open to the poor as to the rich, and leading to the very highest rewards. Push up this path, working men and women, and encourage your fellows to do the same; crowns and thrones, true

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glory and honour are sure and abundant here! We should esteem ourselves right happy if we could but fire all working people with this ambition; if we could but get them haunted by the vision that haunts us, of humble homes brightened by the hopes that cheer the just; of men and women, amid their toils and cares, drawing water with joy from the wells of salvation; the light of heaven falling on the bare house and making all beautiful; the children dwelling in obedience, confidence, and love; truth and honesty, patience and content, sobriety and self-control, faith and love, gems to which diamonds and pearls are mere rubbish, the treasured heirlooms handed down from parent to child!

When one visits a district inhabited by the working classes, one does not often see many traces of this paradise. Carelessness and ignorance, slovenliness and disorder, scolding parents and ill-trained children, if not actual intemperance and open vice, too often show how far we are from the millennium. It is but here and there one meets with families where neatness and cleanliness, cheerfulness and good temper, piety and peace, present some indications of Paradise regained. But the number of such happy homes would be immensely increased, were the earnest cultivation of a moral and religious spirit more common. And how glorious would be the

condition of the country, if, with but few and distant exceptions, the homes of the working classes should be embellished and enriched by those graces and virtues which have a brighter lustre and a higher value than rubies and diamonds. No sights in nature that our eyes are permitted to look on are more interesting than those which unfold, in one view, its manifold riches and varied beauties. What a world of beauty is there in a fine old wood, illuminated some summer eve by the golden glory of the setting sun ! How grand and stately the monarchs of the forest, with their ample domes of living green ! But underneath these mighty canopies there repose whole worlds of humbler beauty. The mosses that form so soft a carpet for our feet, the ferns that perch so gracefully in the nooks and clefts of the rocks, the lichens that embroider the stems of the rugged pines, the insects that gleam in the sunshine, the wild-flowers that regale sight and smell together, how beautiful are they all, and how endless and inexhaustible are their beauties ! Not less inexhaustible would seem the moral and religious wealth of a country, if every humble home were enriched with temperance, cheerfulness, bright domestic affections, and lively piety ; and if these were so grouped and arranged in different families as to produce the beautiful variety we find in the familiar scenes of nature's

wealth. Delightful, too, as those fruits are which may be reaped from godliness in the life that now is, they are trifling compared with the blessings it reserves for the life to come. The enjoyment of a peaceful mind and a happy home, what are they to the favour and blessing of God, and the possession of a heart renewed in His image, and ever drinking from the river of His pleasures?

## CHAPTER II.

### WHOM TO FOLLOW.

"It is in Christianity, real practical Christianity, constantly and undeviatingly acted upon, and made as much our guide through life, as the compass is the marinér's in his course through the ocean, that the remedy for the present evils in our social system is to be found."—*Small Books on Great Subjects*.

WHEN a body of men are setting out on a great and difficult enterprise, it is of the utmost importance to know who are their friends. We wish in this chapter to aid in discovering the true value of one who comes to working people, not only with unbounded offers of friendship, but appealing to the sanction of the highest conceivable authority. Is RELIGION really a friend to working men? Will it make any great difference to their enterprise whether they accept its offer or decline it? Will they move on in their upward course as steadily under the guidance of enlightened reason and good sense alone, as under the guidance of earnest, scriptural Christianity? Is its alliance to be warmly welcomed, or scornfully rejected, or indifferently set aside?

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Suppose we should poll the working classes themselves on this question, what would be the result? Each of the three proposals, we believe, would have its body of supporters, but in very different proportions. A few would very heartily vote for the hearty alliance; they would go in with all their souls for spiritual Christianity, as out of sight the best and truest friend the working man could have or desire. A few others would scoff at the very idea of their deriving benefit from religion in any shape whatever, denouncing it in all its forms as a system of hypocrisy and priestcraft, designed to keep down the many for the paltry interests of the few. But the greatest number, we believe, would show a practical indifference to the question, and give it the go-by. They would not absolutely deny the truth of Christianity; but the fact is, it does not possess their confidence; they have never seen cause to welcome it as their best friend.

Those who are familiar with workshops, tell us that very seldom is the spirit prevalent there friendly to earnest religion. Hugh Miller remarks, in his *Schools and Schoolmasters*, how different he found the tone of workmen on this subject when he came to work as a mason in the south from what he had found in the Northern and Western Highlands. “In my native district and the neighbouring coun-

ties," he says, "religion still spoke with authority, and a man who stood up in its behalf in any society, unless very foolish or very inconsistent, always succeeded in silencing opposition, and making good its claims. Here, however, the irreligious asserted their power as the majority, and carried matters with a high hand; and religion itself, existing as but *dissent*, not as an *establishment*, had to content itself with bare toleration. Remonstrance, or even advice, was not permitted. 'Johnnie, boy,' I have heard one of the rougher mechanics say, half in jest, half in earnest, to my companion, 'if you set yourself to convert me, I'll break your face;' and I have known another of them remark, with a patronizing air, that 'kirks were nae very bad things, after a';' that he 'aye liked to be in a kirk, for the sake o' decency, once a twelvemonth;' and that, 'as he hadna been kirkit for the last ten months, he was just only waiting for a rainy Sabbath to lay in his stock o' divinity for the year.'" During the forty years that have elapsed since the time to which these reminiscences refer, there has no doubt been a change in the prevailing spirit of the working classes towards earnest religion; but much of the old spirit yet remains; and in general we fear it must be confessed that distrust and indifference, if not active opposition, dictates the reception which is given to its claims.

What are the chief reasons for this state of feeling? We believe that in a great measure they may be resolved into one—*ignorance of what Christianity really is and does*; and this ignorance arises from men taking their impressions of religion from *erroneous or imperfect sources*; partly from what they *see*, and partly from what they *feel*. What they see is, the actual religion of the professing church, which unhappily is often a most inaccurate reflection of true Christianity; what they feel is, the natural dislike of the heart of man to anything that resists and fetters its inclinations; this, and little but this, is what religion is supposed to do; and for this reason it is disliked and distrusted, and its friendly offers passed by with indifference.

Let us briefly examine these two reasons.

Many, we say, of the working classes take their notion of religion from what they have seen actually passing under that name, and this, very often, has not been at all fitted to win their respect. In some persons, they have seen religion a mere mass of superstitions—certainly very contemptible; in others, a bondage of fear and trembling; often, they have found high spiritual pretensions accompanied with pride, selfishness, and bitterness, and very low morality; the strifes and contentions of Christians among one another have disgusted them;

the worldly spirit of prominent churchmen has given the whole thing an air of hypocrisy; the break-downs of conspicuous professors of religion have been signals for many a scoffing triumph; and further, religion may never have been seen by them as an angel of mercy, sympathizing with the toiled, the weary, and the struggling; and thus they may have been tempted to think of it rather as a luxury for the rich, than as heaven's best blessing for all. In most of this, no doubt, there is a *measure* of truth, and it shows what fearful harm is done, when the actual lives of professing Christians are not a reflection of the bright and benignant spirit of their Master. But there is a strong tendency, on the part of many, to exaggerate this evil. There is a strong tendency to leave out of view the great amount of true worth that is to be found in the Christian church, and the many beautiful examples of the spirit of Christianity, in its healthiest and most complete form. What workman does not number among his acquaintance at least one man or woman, whom in his inmost heart he knows to be a true Christian,—honest, sound and solid to the very core? Who has not followed to the grave some one that even calumny could not disfigure, and as the sod was spread over him, has not inwardly felt what a blessed thing it would be if

all were like him? And who does not know, or at the least has not heard of some bright examples of the kindly aspect of Christianity towards the needy and the miserable—of wretched families and wretched districts to which well-to-do Christian people have devoted themselves with a most beautiful self-denial, and where angels' visits have been neither few nor far between? It is from *such* examples that the working classes would do well to take their impression of true Christianity; and to judge what sort of reception *they* ought to give it, when it comes to them with the offer of its cordial friendship.

The other source from which working men (like all men) have been apt to take their impressions of religion is, the natural feelings of their own hearts. Very commonly, religion is viewed as little else than a system of *restraints*, checking the heart in all its strong desires, driving these in whenever they would go out, and dooming them to a grim, hard, life-long bondage. If this really were a just impression of religion, dislike to it would be neither unreasonable nor wonderful. But it is the very opposite of a just impression. The statements of Scripture are all to the contrary effect—affirming most emphatically, that Christ finds men slaves and makes them free, finds them miserable and makes them happy, finds

them labouring and heavy-laden and gives them rest. All who have committed themselves to Christ bear the same testimony, telling us that to them life has got all its richest charms and sweetest pleasures since their new birth—

“ Then first they lived, when they began to love.”

Is there truth in these representations? Is this second reason for the distrust of working men towards Christianity even more baseless than the first? If it be, have they not great cause to examine the subject far more seriously and attentively, and consider whether this Christianity, to which they feel so coldly, be not, after all, their most valuable friend?

Christianity claims to be a glorious divine remedy for all the evils that have come into our world by sin. That great evils have somehow come into our world, that the state of things in which we live is very much out of order, none know better, none feel more keenly, than the hard-working classes themselves. We don't need to prove to them that they are not dwelling in Paradise. The lovely garden, with its cool streams, and its abundance of trees pleasant to the sight and good for food, and its gold, and bdelium and onyx, is but a faint tradition of the distant past. Pain and weariness have come to

afflict their bodies. Their lives are spent in toil and turmoil. Difficulties beset them at every turn ; life itself is a struggle ; temptations surround them which it is hard to overcome. Outside and inside, things are out of order. Outside, men are struggling for their interests and their pleasures ; the strong jostling aside the weak, embittering their lives with disappointments and provocations, and snatching from them the very ewe-lamb that lies in their bosom. Inside, there is disorder, too. The heart is not calm. The temper is not placid. Volcanoes rumble and grumble beneath the surface, bursting out at times in words of passion and deeds of violence. A kind of low fever hovers about them, often inflaming their lusts till they become ungovernable, and in their wild excitement, dash and ruin everything. And then a worm sets a gnawing and a taunting, and fills the soul with the bitter sense of evil-doing. It is a miserable state ! And so difficult to cure. Often men resolve and resolve to be better. But it seems as if it would be about equally reasonable to resolve that the winds shall not blow nor the waves beat. The storm comes back in spite of all. Things are bad enough now, and the tendency is to get worse, and what the end is to be, they never like to contemplate.

Well, it is this state of things that Christianity

undertakes to deal with and to remedy. In common disorders, it usually happens, that if you can tell what has caused the disease, you are in a fair way to find the remedy. Christianity proclaims that the primary cause of all this disorder is, that man has forsaken God,—the child has abandoned its home,—the feeble sheep has strayed from the fold. We are out of our place—dislocated—off the rails—rocking and jolting in a wrong groove, and rushing on to an awful crash. It proclaims, likewise, that what first of all is most indispensable to a cure is, that man come back to his God. The prodigal must return to his home; the dislocated joint must be set; the train must be replaced on the right rails; the sheep must let itself be laid on the shoulders of the Shepherd who has come to seek for it, and be carried back to the comfort and security of the fold.

But Christianity not only *teaches* what has caused the disease, and what would cure it, it also *provides* the remedy. The Son of God has been manifested in the flesh to bring back wanderers to their home. And whereas they have broken God's law, and incurred its penalty, and the holy God cannot pass by such transgression without satisfaction, Jesus has made that satisfaction; He has made it at unutterable cost, completing it by his agony and death on the cross: and God has accepted it in full. And

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now, through His messengers, God everywhere proclaims this great truth, and invites all wanderers to return to His favour, and to the privileges of their recovered home ; assuring them that their return will be to Him the occasion of exceeding joy ; partly because the bereaved Father loves to recover His erring children ; and partly because their return will redound to the glory of that well-beloved Son who came to seek and to save them, and who desires no other reward than the joy of the husbandman who goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, but comes again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

If this be the first grand design of revealed religion, why should any, and above all, why should the working classes distrust it ? In the view even of the life that now is, is it not a great matter to be at peace with God ? Is it not a great matter to have your own place again at home ? To have access to your Father, to have the benefit of His kind training, His wise counsels, His wholesome influence ? To know that He loves you, that He is interested in you, that He possesses everything that you need, that in trouble He will deliver you, that He will calm your passions, strengthen you for all your battles, soothe you in all your sorrows,—in short, that He will withhold no good thing from you while

you walk uprightly? Christianity comes offering to every one of you the friendship and highest favour of the Almighty. If it can be shown that it does not provide what it promises, let *that* be the avowed ground on which it is rejected; but never let it be said that any one believed its offer, but rejected it or treated it with indifference *because it was not worth his pains!*

Besides the great blessing that has now been adverted to, there are many other aspects of Christianity so very favourable to the circumstances of working people, as to make their indifference towards it wear an aspect of singular infatuation. Our time will not be mis-spent if we touch briefly on a few of these.

Let us begin with what may be called the *steady-ing* and *strengthening* influence of Christianity. By its steady-ing influence we mean the power which it gives a man to walk erect, unseduced by temptation, uncorrupted by pleasure, unbeguiled by the love of ease. To do this is often far from easy. There are few men but have some weak point, where temptation is peculiarly dangerous. It is painful to mark, when men and women are setting out in life, with the dewy vigour of youth upon them, how soon many of them faint and grow weary, and some even utterly fail. *There* is one whom intemperance has

begun to destroy. There is another lured into dishonest ways. There is a third becoming the victim of licentiousness. There is a whole cluster, tiring of work, becoming idle, aimless, good-for-nothing. How many shipwrecks take place year after year from such causes, and in how many other cases, where the wreck is not complete, do we see the man and woman crippled for life, trailing a shattered frame along a path alike painful and dishonoured! What a blessing to the working classes, and indeed to all, if any one could hold them up, could steady and strengthen them, when such perils surround! But Christ is that very friend. Under His guidance they will steer clear of all these rocks and quick-sands, they will move erect and steady through all these tempests and hurricanes. From Joseph they will have their ready answer for temptation, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" The apostle will give them their motto for daily work, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." The emblem of their course in life will be the "tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth fruit in its season; its leaf also shall not wither." The soaring flight of the king of birds will represent their sublime destiny: "They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Or again, consider the *protection and sympathy* which Christianity brings to the working man. In all ages of the world, oppression has been the heritage of the weak. Those who have had no might to enforce their claims, have commonly been treated as if they had neither rights nor feelings. The poor man has been held down, as if he were fit for nothing better than hewing wood and drawing water. It is the Bible, beyond all doubt, that forms the poor man's charter. From first to last, the Bible stands up for the needy, and him that hath no helper. What withering blasts did the prophets direct against those who ground the faces of the poor, and cheated the hireling of his wages ! Then, too, the whole spirit of the Bible is one of respect for man *as man*—not for a few whom artificial distinctions have raised above others, but for every one that has been made in the likeness of God. And in the New Testament, when the Christian Church is formed, its members are all brethren in Christ. The strong are called to help the weak, the rich are called to succour the poor, and all are called to bear one another's burdens. And the more that true Christianity spreads, the more will this spirit spread with it. The rich man's scorn and the poor man's contumely will more and more become things of the past. The humblest labourer will feel that he has the respect and sym-

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pathy of those who might otherwise have despised him and trampled on him. Or if, from any cause, it should be otherwise, as a servant of Christ he will have something to reconcile him to his treatment, in the remembrance that even his Divine Master was despised and rejected of men.

Look, again, at the advantage which Christianity would give to the working classes in the management of all their schemes for mutual help. At the present moment, they are profoundly convinced of the great value of the principle of *union*, but they are in great difficulty how to turn it to account. They feel that the six millions of working men in Great Britain should be a most powerful body, if they were properly united and thoroughly organized. But how to attain this union is the difficulty. They are like men who have got hold of a machine, evidently of marvellous power, but they do not know how to work it. Are we wrong in saying that one of the great difficulties in this matter is the difficulty of management? Societies are formed that seem very hopeful, unions are organized, but they go to pieces, because the managers fall out among themselves, or the members fall foul of the managers. *Smooth working* among those that do the work is the great desideratum. How comes it that the comparatively smooth working which is found in other

bodies is so difficult of attainment among the working classes? Mainly, we believe, *through want of mutual forbearance*. Each man is too ready to insist on his own way of doing things, and to quarrel with his brother if he will not adopt it. There is a tendency to force one's own opinion, and a want of due regard for the opinion of others. It is always a delicate thing among equals to preserve each man's freedom. There is needed much friendly consideration, much Christian forbearance, and, where there is no essential lack of principle, much confidence in one another. These qualities, so essential to the working classes in the management of their schemes, true Christianity supplies. It allows freedom to all men, within "the limits of what is right and good; but forbearance is one of its prominent graces, and there is no evil which it more carefully guards against, than setting at nought the conscientious scruples of brethren. It requires us, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men. It counsels us to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. It bids us look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. If all these counsels were transferred to the hearts of those who manage for the working classes; if the spirit of these qualities were infused into their mode of conducting business, would not the machine

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work far more smoothly, and bring a far higher measure of success ?

Another blissful aspect of true Christianity to the sons and daughters of toil, may be found in the *sunshine and serenity* which it brings. There is infinite truth and beauty in those figures of speech that describe Christ as the "Sun of Righteousness," as the "Light of the morning," "the bright and the morning star." Sunbeams go forth from him continually, and they are continually lighting upon the hearts of his people. Under their influence, toil, which was inflicted as a curse, changes its hue, and gets a touch of brightness ; each day's work becomes a moral victory and a holy offering, and the very difficulty and self-denial that attend it, give it a glory when it is fairly done. Of the Christian workman, emphatically it is true :—

" Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,  
Onward thro' life he goes ;  
Each morning sees some task begun,  
Each evening sees it close :  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose."

What shall we say of the sunshine that streams out on him from the open pages of his Bible ? Or of the beams of love and peace which fall on him as he begins his Sabbath thinking of his Lord's great victory, and goes on to forecast the rest in glory

which the day prefigures ? Then there is the Holy Supper, when the sun appears to shine down from a peerless sky ; and, in a less degree, the sunshine of favourite books, and of meetings with congenial friends. And what a variety of bright and cheery thoughts may each day's common sights call up ! The lilies of the field, the ravens, the sparrows, the sky, the rivers, the fragrant spices of the garden,—signs and symbols of higher things,—how rich are they all to him in delightful thoughts !

“ There are as many lovely things,  
As many pleasant tones,  
For those who sit by cottage hearths,  
As those who sit on thrones.”

But there is one spot which is peculiarly and pre-eminently brightened, when it is brightened by this sunshine—his *home*. Is anything earthly more beautiful than a humble home, lighted up by Christian sunshine ? A home of content and order, of cheerful voices and loving hearts, of humble thoughts but sublime hopes. It may have its deep sorrows, but it will have too, to him who is quick to reckon them, joys numberless as the sun-gleams that dance on the sea. Each word and look of love from each member of the house ; each victory gained by young warriors over passion and temptation ; each bud of grace that appears, rich with the promise of a holy

and loving life; each sign of truth and tenderness, of trust in Christ, and the purpose to serve Him, in any son or daughter, reflecting as they all do the sunshine of heaven, will be a source of gladness in that home. Will their humble meals not taste sweeter for the blessing so reverently asked before them? Will their sleep not be more refreshing that they have all kneeled at night at the throne of grace, and commended themselves to Him that neither slumbers nor sleeps? Will the trials and worries of the day not fall easier on them when they have cased themselves from head to foot in the armour of God, and laid in a stock of patience and self-control to meet them? Will the six days of labour be none the lightomer for the sunshine of the day of rest? Will no "music of wonderful melodies" be heard in their soul after their Sabbath converse with "the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs?"—

" Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction  
That follows after prayer."

Do not say, "These are mere dreams of fancy. There is too much knocking about in the workman's house for scenes like these. Things must go on there in a rougher fashion, and we may be glad if

we get through anyhow, in a decent way, without all that romantic nonsense." My good friend, the very tone of your answer shows that you have become soured and hopeless through want of that very sunshine of which we now speak. If you had welcomed Christ as your best friend at an early period of your life, you would have very different feelings now. You would feel that there is no end to the brightness and serenity with which He is able to fill the humblest home, and cheer the roughest lot of humanity.

One other benefit we must notice which Christianity brings pre-eminently to the working classes,—I mean the spirit of *hope*. Notwithstanding all its present benefits, the Gospel reserves its chief glories for hereafter. What Jesus did at the marriage-feast at Cana of Galilee he does still; he keeps the good wine to the last. There is no class or condition of real Christians whose hearts this great truth is not fitted to cheer, but it has a special adaptation to those whose lot in life is but poorly furnished. As often as the heart is disposed to be downcast from present hardship or want, hope may be summoned with its reviving cordials. It is often dejecting even to think of the hardness of a poor man's lot. So much toil, day after day, month after month, year after year. Toil through the cold and

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gloomy winter. Toil through all the mocking brightness of summer. Toil while the blossoms are bursting in spring, and toil while the clusters hang rich and mellow in autumn. Toil when the bones are aching, toil when the little ones are ailing, toil when the shadow of death is falling, toil when the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. As Ebenezer Elliott puts it—

“ Up, weary man of eighty-five,  
And toil in hopeless woe !”

It would be a hard lot, it is a hard lot, with the pleasures of hope unknown. So weary a journey and no home at the end, so hard a struggle, and no earthly chance of relief; what could be worse? But Christianity dispels this gloom. It draws the curtain a little to the side, and bids the toil-worn believer look through. The glare of glory is too bright for distinguishing all, but enough is seen to satisfy every craving of the weary heart. It is so satisfying, that the question that starts up is, Can it be real? In the view of such glories, the toil even of threescore years is felt as nothing; and the cry of the spirit is for patience to wait without a murmur, till at length the gates shall be thrown open, and the trumpet-voice be heard,—“ Come up hither! ” .

We have but touched, in these remarks, on a wide and varied subject—the blessedness of Christianity

to the children of toil. But we believe enough has been said to justify us in repeating our wonder, our profound regret at the fact, that to so large an extent the working classes show distrust and dislike to earnest spiritual religion, as if it were rather a rigid exactor or tax-gatherer whom it is a happiness to get rid of, than the best of friends whom it is their greatest privilege to welcome. They stand most grievously in their own light. The spirit of true Christianity, kindly and genial as it truly is, and should ever appear to be, would render their earthly lot tenfold more blessed, not to speak of the treasures it would secure for eternity, treasures which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the mind of man.

It may be that not a few who read these lines need no more than to have their minds stirred up by way of remembrance. But, working men and women, are there not thousands and tens of thousands of your order who think not of these things? Must we not try to reach them, and get their hearts, by God's help, filled with these earnest convictions? When one thinks of the only sunshine that transfigures life, and turns it from a funeral procession to a triumphal march, and when one remembers what masses of the people hate that very sunshine, and deliberately prefer the cold shade of infidelity, or at

least indifference, how agonizing is the thought ! Separate the working masses from Christ, and then Mr. Potter's remark comes true—life is a ceaseless degradation, a daily martyrdom, a funeral procession to the grave. Bring them under Christ's banner, it is the pathway to glory, honour, and immortality.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE SWEAT OF THE BROW.

" For men must work, and women must weep,  
And there's little to earn, and many to keep."

KINGSLEY.

" FINLAY was away ; my friend of the Doocot cave was away ; my other companions were all scattered abroad ; my mother, after a long widowhood of more than eleven years, had entered into a second marriage ; and I found myself standing face to face with a life of labour and restraint. The prospect appeared dreary in the extreme. The necessity of ever toiling from morning to night, and from one week's end to another, and all for a little coarse food and homely raiment, seemed to be a dire one, and fain would I have avoided it. But there was no escape, and so I determined on being a mason."

So writes, in his *Schools and Schoolmasters*, one of whom working men may well be proud, and at whose feet all men may well sit for many a noble lesson. Many a working man is doubtless familiar with the feeling to which Hugh Miller alludes here, and like

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him, has found it no easy task to bring his mind to a life of toil. Some, perhaps, think very little on the subject; and some, both in their apprenticeship and in later years, take work very easily, and do not scruple to make inroads on it whenever they can; little credit therefore is due to them; but we will say that it is a great victory to begin with, when a lad, with all his schoolboy love of play, brings his mind steadily to face a life of labour and restraint, from morning to night, and from one week's end to another, all for a little coarse food and homely raiment; and it is a perpetual renewal of the victory, when, as years advance, and the weary frame gets more clamorous for rest, the six o'clock morning bell, tyrant though it often seems, is obeyed with as steady loyalty, if not as great alacrity as ever.

We are accustomed to speak of the curse of labour; but it should never be forgotten that, except when it is absolutely overwhelming, there is a blessing in labour as well as a curse. The blessing lies chiefly in the *training* which it supplies, and the full value of that training will only be seen when the life to come is taken into account. We must not make a virtue of necessity; and yet necessity is sometimes a great help to virtue. By what he feels to be the very necessity of his situation, the steady workman is constrained to conquer many clamorous lusts; he

keeps down as with a rod of iron the baser propensities of his animal nature ; he learns to be useful ; he learns to be independent ; he learns to accommodate himself to his fellow-workmen, and yet to hold his own when it is needful ; and he acquires the invaluable habit of persevering effort. Many a time, in the midst of hard work, the feeling will hover round him—"Oh this weary work—might I not throw off the harness a little, and snatch a cup of pleasure, regardless of the future ?" If his spirits are high, the craving will be for excitement ; if they are low, it will be for rest ; whether they are high or low, it will often be for strong drink. But the industrious and virtuous workman keeps all these cravings down ; he must not dream of these things ; he must be steady to his work. And hence, even to persons who have not to labour with their hands, and the regularity of whose work depends on their own will and conscience, the sight of physical labourers steadily at work is charged with a most useful lesson. *There* are men who, for nine or ten long hours, hardly lose a minute, make diligent use of their working talents, and brush aside every temptation to indolence. Would it not be well for some of us, if, in *our* department of work, we were as diligent, and made as constant use of *our* working talents as they ?

But there is no rule without exception. And there are exceptions here. It is seen in many cases, that this devotion to work is the effect of mere and sheer necessity—nothing higher. At the stroke of six o'clock, when that necessity is removed, the goodly spectacle is often disenchanted; the workman not unfrequently hastens to abandon himself to the indulgence which he has been driving off all day. He made a bargain with his employer that he would work so many hours; on his fulfilment of that bargain the payment of his wages depends; when once the wages are earned, and his fellow-labourers, who kept him to his work very much as a team of horses keeps a lazy one in motion—when they are dispersed, and he is left quite to himself, his self-control flies to the winds. This is lamentable. The chances are, that in the dissipation of the evening the man wastes all the earnings of the day; but be this as it may, it is certain that he loses entirely all the high moral benefit which an inheritance of labour is fitted to bring. The harness and habits of daily toil do not help him to hold himself erect, to resist temptation right and left, to fight manfully the battle of life; he throws down his arms when he throws down his tools; and lets the Philistines rush upon him and treat him as they please. This is simply deplorable; it is the thing of all others

which working men should shun ; the command which they gain over themselves in the hours of labour is worse than useless if it be not continued during the hours of rest ; it gives them only the greater power of mischief, and it leaves them without excuse. It shows that the power of money and the influence of companionship in labour are far more effectual than the force of conscience, or the love of goodness, or the command of God, or the example of Christ, or all these combined ; it shows them to be not merely weak, but contemptible ; capable of doing for a paltry consideration what they will not do for all the highest and weightiest considerations by which immortal beings should be swayed.

It is impossible to speak too strongly of the value of a spirit of virtuous, self-denying, persevering industry, even as regards the life that now is. Should you happen to fall in with Mr. Mayhew's elaborate work on the prisons of London, you will find it made very clear that it is not a direct fondness for vice that fills our prisons ; it is not innate criminality of disposition that drives many young men to a vicious life ; it is dislike to hard, steady, homely labour—a wish to enjoy the pleasures of life on easier terms than those of honest toil. Inquire how it comes to pass that so many young women take to the streets, and in far

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the greater number of cases you will get the same answer. Happy the man, in a temporal sense at all events, who, pursuing in his lawful calling the steady course of plodding industry, shoulders aside the temptations of lust and pleasure, as the prow of a steamer tosses from it the spray that would hinder its course, and holds himself erect, and walks as a man, where thousands, seduced by temptation, are weltering in the gulf of sensuality! We talk of the dignity of labour; it is this that makes labour honourable; this is labour associated with perpetual victory, crowned every day with fresh glory and honour; and the man who lives and labours thus is often far more deserving of honour, than those whose breasts are crowded with the stars and crosses and ribbons of a fictitious nobility. "Noble, upright, self-denying toil," exclaims Hugh Miller, "who that knows thy solid worth and value would be ashamed of thy hard hands, and thy soiled vestments, and thy obscure tasks; thy humble cottage, and hard couch, and homely fare? Save for thee and thy lessons, man in society would everywhere sink into a sad compound of the fiend and the wild beast, and this fallen world would be as certainly a moral as a natural wilderness. But I little thought of the excellence of thy character and of thy teachings, when, with a heavy heart, I set out, on a morn-

ing of early spring, to take my first lesson from thee  
in a sandstone quarry."<sup>1</sup>

After all, as it has been said, "no work is the  
hardest work."

Ho ! ye who at the anvil toil,  
And strike the sounding blow,  
Where from the burning iron's breast  
The sparks fly to and fro ;  
While answering to the hammer's ring,  
And fire's intenser glow,  
Oh ! while ye feel 'tis hard to toil  
And sweat the long day through,  
Remember it is harder still  
To have no work to do.

Ho ! all who labour, all who strive,  
Ye wield a lofty power ;  
Do with your might, do with your strength,  
Fill every golden hour !  
The glorious privilege to do  
Is man's most noble dower.

<sup>1</sup> A friend in London told us lately that he had been in conversation with Mr. Mason, the well-known emissary of the Confederate States, whose capture in the "Trent," along with Mr. Sliddel, made such a noise some time ago. Mr. Mason told him, that what struck him most in the condition of England, was the steadiness and the readiness with which the working classes performed even the most disagreeable and laborious tasks. He could not have believed, till he came to this country, that such work could be got done without slavery. It seemed to him impossible, without the use of force, to induce men to undertake and continue to perform such tasks. It certainly indicates no inconsiderable progress in civilisation when all the work of a country can be done without compulsion ; and it is creditable to us that, even in manning the navy, the aid of the press-gang, which may be said to have been the last relic in this country of absolute compulsion to work, has been dispensed with.

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Oh ! to your birthright and yourselves,  
To your own souls be true ;  
A weary, wretched life is theirs  
Who have no work to do.

We would not stop here in speaking of the benefits of that training which labour brings, or at least offers. There is a connexion, we believe, in the case of the Christian workman, between the training which he receives thus in this world, and the service in which it will be God's good pleasure to employ him hereafter. Many excellent people draw too broad a line of separation between this life and the life to come. They fancy that their worldly employment is nothing but a hindrance to their spiritual life, and that, if only they could get rid of the one, they would be in far better circumstances to prosecute the other. But is not this something like charging God foolishly ? Is not this charging God with placing his children at the very worst preparatory school possible—a school where they can get no right training for the future, except at by-hours, or by extra lessons ? God's ordinary rule is very different. When he is preparing his creatures for a higher life, the preparatory life is always adapted with great skill to the more advanced. The caterpillar and the chrysalis are adapted to the future career of the moth and the butterfly, the tadpole to that of the frog, infancy to childhood, childhood to

manhood. Are we to suppose the analogy fails in the most important case of any—the adaptation of the earthly to the everlasting life? We cannot believe it. Moses and David, when they were shepherds, were undergoing preparation for the highest office of kinghood; and the apostles, as they cast their nets in the lake of Galilee, were preparing to be fishers of men. No one could have predicted that the shepherd would develop into the king, or the fisherman into the apostle. No one can predict now what the Christian labourer or mechanic may, by God's grace, develop into in heaven. For it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know, however, that he that is faithful in a few things, shall be made ruler over many things; and that the awards of heaven depend not on the original number of your talents, but on the improvement you have made of them. We need not say that, in this remark, it is Christian workmen we have in view. Hugh Miller tells us, that one of the best persons he ever knew was a poor widow in Inverness, conscientious and devout, and ever doing her humble work consciously in the eye of the great Taskmaster. "She was a humble washerwoman," he adds, "but I am convinced that in the other world, which she must have entered long ere now, she ranks considerably higher."

In any case, it cannot be too strongly urged how

immeasurably the burden of hard, humble labour will be lightened wherever the heart is pervaded by the feeling, that such toil is the service to which a wise, gracious Father in heaven is pleased to appoint you. Confidence in the considerate care and kindness of God, when He is seen in Christ as a God of love, will go an immense way in making the yoke easy and the burden light. Long hours, hard toil, coarse clothing, humble fare, so far as these are inseparable from your condition, and are not the fruit of your own indolence or folly, will be in a sense transfigured, made radiant with the light of heaven, when they are numbered with the "all things that work together for good." For nearly half his lifetime on earth, the divine Saviour of the world had no better lot. For many a year the morning sun found him toiling in the workshop of Nazareth, fashioning, most likely, tables, and chairs, and ladders, and ploughs for the wild, rough Nazarenes; often weary, often worried, and often, doubtless, confronted with the question whether this was fit work for one that had come to save the world, and whether it was desirable that so many years of vigour should be consumed in so humble toil. But in his case, every rising feeling of this kind would be silenced by the thought that such was the appointment of Him, whose will, he, as a man, had bound himself to

acquiesce in, and whose work he had undertaken to do. The example of Christ will often present itself to the Christian workman as a motive of commanding power. A French workman, who was guillotined in Paris in the reign of terror, is said to have boasted on the scaffold that the *sans-culotte* Jesus Christ belonged to the same fraternity as he. The excited and half-frantic democrat had caught a distorted glimpse of the great truth, which in its clearness and beauty can never be far from the view of the Christian workman, that the King of Glory, when he came to earth to suffer for his sins, did at the same time, as a brother-labourer, share his burdens and endure his toils.

Besides these considerations, there are many others of a more ordinary kind that should be kept before your minds, as contributing to give you success in your work, and to lighten its burden.

In the first place, all experience goes to prove the immense value to the workman of the spirit of steadiness and perseverance. "Persevere," used to be the constant advice of George Stephenson to young workmen. His own wonderful career had been a striking proof of the value of the principle. The son of a poor workman, and brought up as one of a family of eight persons, on twelve shillings a week, he had PERSEVERED, and through perseverance

he had triumphed. No man ever brushed aside more vigorously or more uniformly the temptations to idleness and listlessness. Improving every spare moment,—“the gold dust of time,” as Young calls it; learning to read long after he had begun to work; using his eyes and his brains on everything that came under his notice, and especially on the machinery with which he worked,—he became at last the founder of our vast railway system, and one of the most honoured and valued men of the country. “The man,” he said, “that wished to rise in his trade or profession, must never see any insurmountable difficulties before him. Obstacles might appear to be such; but they must be thrown overboard or conquered.” This was the course he had himself pursued. Even the Chat Moss, on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, after it had swallowed up the funds of the company, and whole embankments of earth, and all the ordinary resources of engineers, did not swallow up the perseverance of George Stephenson, and he conquered it. To all who work among machinery, the example and counsels of Stephenson are particularly useful. Mr. Smiles, his biographer, well remarks, that in the improvement of the steam-engine, mechanical instinct has carried the day over the efforts of pure intellect. It is not our philosophers in their closets, but our practical

men, such as James Watt, the instrument-maker, and George Stephenson, the working engineer, that have discovered and improved the steam-engine. The remark is full of instruction for practical engineers. More especially if they have that spirit of devout admiration of the wisdom of the Great Artificer that characterized Stephenson ! “ Whilst walking in the woods, or through the grounds (in his later years), he would arrest the attention of his friends by allusion to some simple object,—such as a leaf, a blade of grass, a bit of bark, a nest of birds, or an ant carrying its eggs across the path,—and descant in glowing terms on the creative power of the Divine Mechanician, whose contrivances were so exhaustless and so wonderful. This was a theme upon which he was often accustomed to dwell, in reverential admiration, when in the society of his more intimate friends.”

Stephenson was far too wise a man not to see that if he meant to rise as a workman, he must act throughout on the most determined rules of sobriety. When very young, “ on the invitation of his master, Ralph Dodds,—and an invitation from a master to a workman is not easy to resist,—he had been induced occasionally to join him in a forenoon glass of ale in the public-house of the village. But one day, about noon, when Mr. Dodds had got him as far as

the public-house door, on his invitation to 'come and take a glass o' ye,' Stephenson made a dead stop, and said firmly, 'No, sir, you must excuse me; I have made a resolution to drink no more at this time of day.' And he went back. He desired to retain the character of a steady workman; and the instances of the men about him who had made shipwreck of their character through intemperance, were then, as now, unhappily too frequent."

In the next place, it must be laid down as indispensable to a successful and honourable workman, that he cultivate a habit of strictest truthfulness and integrity. It cannot need to be proved that no man or woman, in any rank of life, is worthy of esteem, whose word cannot be relied on as perfectly true, and whose fingers cannot be trusted as perfectly honest. We would specially urge a high standard of truth and integrity *between servants and masters*. It is a fact which few will question, that less guilt is often attached to deceit practised towards a master or mistress, than to deceit practised toward a fellow-servant. No doubt this practice of deception may be owing, in some instances, to the furious tempers of masters and mistresses, which drive truth away from them; but the practice indicates the leaven of a very wretched feeling—the feeling that employers are a kind of natural enemies to their servants; and

on the principle that anything is fair in war, any advantage may be taken of an employer. At the bottom of all this lies a very defective sense of the essential wickedness and meanness of deceit,—its sinfulness in itself, as well as in its consequences. Deceit is a bad thing, it is thought, if it involves one's equals in trouble; but by no means a bad thing if it helps a comrade out of a difficulty, or saves one from a scolding. We cannot think it is possible to apply too widely the maxim : "Honesty is the best policy." Transparent truthfulness is a beautiful thing. Let every workman that wishes to rise declare war against all deceit and dishonesty, and live so that it may be said of him when he dies, "His word was as good as his oath."

This leads us to notice another thing most essential to comfortable and successful work, viz., a spirit of *sympathy* between employers and employed—for innumerable evils of a most serious kind arise from the want of this spirit. A workshop, like a garden, needs sunshine and genial warmth to develop freely the qualities that are looked for in it. A kindly, genial master supplies the sunshine, and it will be a shame and a sin on the part of the men under him, if there be not in his establishment, in the willing, cheerful spirit of the men, something like the fragrance and beauty which sunshine causes in a

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garden. A hard, ungenial master, on the other hand, is like frost in a garden ; he chills, freezes, hardens everything, and makes it as difficult for a workman to act well, as it is for a plant to develop freely under a biting frost. Very much of the alienation between masters and men is due, we are sure, to this cause. We have got a word now-a-days which shows too expressively the common notion entertained of workmen — we mean the word “hands ;” it is to our ears a most repulsive one ; we shrink from hearing men called “hands ;” that is, machines with five pair of fingers, self-acting and self-regulating ; very useful for particular kinds of work, as long as the said five pair of fingers are not chopped off, or are not stiff or feeble, but not men, not brothers, not recognised as partakers of the same nature as their employers. Christian duty requires servants to be faithful even to froward and tyrannical masters, and there is really nothing but the spirit of Christianity that can secure fidelity and cheerfulness in such difficult circumstances. The natural and ordinary result of such a state of things is, that the master receives no hearty or cheerful compliance with his wishes. Behind his back, there is no end of fretting, complaining, and evil-speaking. A constant skirmishing goes on between master and servant, and often an open quarrel

and abrupt dismissal terminate the miserable connexion. The same spirit, on a wider basis, leads to fierce party strifes, and often to terrible revolutions. The alienation in France between the nobles and the people culminated at length in the Revolution and the Reign of Terror. A spirit of bitter alienation between class and class would be more formidable for Great Britain than the fitting out of a fleet of iron-sides at Cherbourg ; while the spirit of conciliation and sympathy, on the other hand, would do more for our welfare than even a whole army of volunteers.

But all masters and employers are not of the hard, unsympathizing type. And servants should consider this. We fear they sometimes do not discriminate enough between a good master and a bad. If they did, a slight advance of wages would never tempt them away from a master who was like a father to them, to one who would never trouble himself about anything beyond their doing their work and receiving their wages. The same temptation would not draw a female servant from a family where a most friendly interest was shown in her welfare, to one where she would be treated almost as if she belonged to an inferior creation. An able writer says of Sir Walter Scott, who, so far as this world was concerned, was an excellent master : " The

people dependent on him were happier, I imagine, than you could have made them if you had made them independent. If you could have distributed, as it were, Scott's worldly prosperity, you cannot easily conceive that it would have produced more good than when it fell full on him, and was forthwith radiated to all around him. . . . We must, I think, attribute much of this admirable bearing in Scott to an essential kindness of nature, and a deep sense of humanity. If he had possessed no peculiar gifts of expression or imagination, and quietly followed the vocation of his father, a writer to the signet, he would have been loved in his office, as he was on his estate, and old clerks would have been Laidlaws and Tom Purdies to him.”<sup>1</sup>

No human being that travelled on a railway a year or two ago, could fail to know “Price’s Patent Candle Company.” The staring placard with the picture of the Belmont Works, haunted us at that time at every railway station in the kingdom. Not quite so many persons, we fancy, though doubtless a great many, are familiar with the beautiful and most interesting arrangements which the managers of that Company made some years ago, and carried on a considerable time, for the benefit of their men. It would take

<sup>1</sup> *The Claims of Labour*, pp. 262, 263.

more than a whole lecture to tell of all that Mr. James Wilson, one of the managers, has done for this end. A great admirer of the late Dr. Arnold of Rugby, he had drunk in (as many others have done) his earnest views on our social system, and was deeply impressed with the importance of endeavouring, by the interchange of friendly offices, to lessen the widening breach between the employer and the employed. The Candle Company employ a great number of boys and girls ; and their first step for their improvement was, the establishment of evening schools for each sex, where they might carry on their education when not employed in labour. The next of the Belmont institutions was a cricket-field, where master and men and boys joined in healthy sport, drinking in, from the animated game, both health for the body, and a kindly, genial spirit towards one another. Then followed excursions to the country, and many other friendly arrangements, including, among other things, very judicious and kindly provision for the religious improvement of all ; the whole carried out in a spirit of kindness that charms even the distant reader, and must have had a most delightful effect upon the people themselves. People treated thus would do anything for their masters. The managers of the Company found that, even in a money point of view, their outlay for

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such objects was not lost ; it returned to them in the greater carefulness and diligence of all, and especially of the boys and girls employed in their factory.

Even when their masters are of a reserved and difficult temper, workmen should aim at serving them in a pleasant and cheerful manner. If the distance between them be already too great, intelligent servants will beware of making it greater. No doubt this is a most difficult thing to do. To be civil, and cheerful, and pleasant to a surly and almost insolent employer, is a spirit most difficult to maintain, and we cannot but express great admiration for those who are enabled to do their duty under such discouraging circumstances. But in this respect, Christianity does great service to those who are anxious to do their duty. By what we may call a mental substitution, it places another Master before them, one whose "yoke is easy, and whose burden is light." It directs them to view the hard exactions of their earthly masters as if Christ, not man, were making them ; and it requires that the same cheerful compliance be rendered which would be given if Christ personally were asking it. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers ; but in singleness of heart, fearing God : and what-

soever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto man." This is not the spirit of crouching servility, but of true nobleness of heart; and the beauty of it is, that, if only cultivated and practised, even when masters were neglectful of *their* duty, it would in due time, by overcoming evil with good, bring about that pleasant relation between them and their servants on which the comfort and welfare of both so greatly depend.

We would now say a few things on the spirit that workmen should show to one another, and especially toward apprentices, labourers, and aged and infirm persons in the same employment as themselves.

We cannot do better here than enforce the golden rule, "Do as you would be done by." It has sometimes been alleged, and not without truth, that the loudest declaimers against tyranny are tyrants in their own sphere. Journeymen, perhaps, as often tyrannize over apprentices and labourers, as masters over their men. Even so great a man as Benjamin Franklin, when working as a journeyman printer, was the victim of this kind of tyranny. Because he would not conform to the drinking usages of his fellow-workmen, he was subjected to all kinds of annoyance. "My employer desiring," he says, "after some weeks to have me in the composing room, I left the pressmen. A new *bien venu* for drink, being

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five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid one to the pressmen. The master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an *excommunicate*, and had so many pieces of private malice practised on me, by mixing my sorts, transposing and breaking my matter, etc. etc., if ever I stepped out of the room, and all ascribed to the *chapel ghost*, which, they said, ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that notwithstanding my master's prohibition, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money."

Another illustration of this practice may be found in a book published a few years ago, *The Autobiography of a Working Man*. The party referred to in the extract, were working at a quarry on the Berwick coast, and the time was during the agitation for the Reform Bill :—

“ One day, when we had been reading in the newspapers a great deal about the tyranny of the Tories, and the tyranny of the aristocracy in general, and some of the hewers had been, as usual, wordy and loud in denouncing all tyrants, and exclaiming, ‘ Down with them for ever ! ’ one of them took up a long wooden straight-edge, and struck a labourer with the sharp edge of it over the shoulders. Throwing down my pick, I turned round and told him that so long as I was about the works I would not see a labourer struck in that manner, without questioning

the mason's pretended right to domineer over labourers. ' You exclaim against tyranny,' I continued, ' and you yourselves are tyrants, if anybody is.' The hewer answered, that I had no business to interfere—that he had not struck me. ' No,' said I, ' or you would have been in the sea by this time. But I have seen labourers who dared not speak for themselves knocked about by you and many others, and by every mason about these works. I have seen labourers ordered to do things, and compelled to do them, which no working man should order another to do, far less have power to compel him to do ; and I tell you it shall not be done.' The labourers gathered around me ; the masons conferred together. One of them said, speaking for the rest, that he must put a stop to this ; the privileges of masons were not to be questioned by labourers, and I must either submit to that reproof or punishment which they thought fit to inflict, or leave the works ; if not, *they* must all leave the works. The punishment hinted at was, to submit to be held over one of the blocks of stone, face downward, the feet held down on one side, the head and the arms held down on the other side, while the mason apprentices would whack the offender with their aprons knotted hard. I said, ' That so far from submitting to reproof or punishment, I would carry my opposition a great deal further than I had done. They had all talked about Parliamentary reform ; we had all joined in the cry for reform, and denounced the exclusive privileges of the anti-reformers, but I would begin reform where we then stood. I would demand, and I then demanded, that if a hewer wanted his stone turned over, and called labourers together to do it, they should not put hands to it unless he assisted ; that if a hewer struck a labourer at his work, none of the labourers should do anything thereafter, of any nature whatever, for that hewer. (The masons laughed.) And further,' said I, ' the masons shall not be entitled to

any room they choose, if we go into a public-house to be paid, to the exclusion of the labourers ; nor, if there be only one room in the house, shall the labourers be sent outside the door to give the room to the masons, as has been the case. In everything we shall be your equals, except in wages—that we have no right to expect.' The masons, on hearing these conditions, set up a shout of derisive laughter. It was against the laws of their body, they said, to hear their privileges discussed by a labourer— . . . that wherever masons were at work, they were superior, and their privileges not to be questioned— . . . that in this case the labourer was insolent to the mason, and the mason had a right to strike him. They demanded that I should at once cease to argue the question, and submit, before it was too late, to whatever punishment they chose to inflict. Upon hearing this, I put myself in a defensive attitude, and said, 'Let me see who shall first lay hands on me !' . . . None of them offered to lay hands on me ; one said they had better let the affair rest where it was, as there would only be a fight about it, and several others assented ; and so we resumed our work."—Pp. 145-147.

Were we to venture on specific recommendations to workmen on the spirit they should cultivate towards one another, we would say—

(1.) Be particularly careful to keep your temper. You have often temptations to lose it. The boy who works to you may be a very stupid one, or your neighbour may be a very disobliging one. At the moment when you have something important on hand, it is ruined through the boy's stupidity, or the disobliging selfishness of your neighbour. Your first

impulse is to pour out a volley. Be assured, it is not a right impulse, and, in the end, it will do more harm than good. Think of the noble moral victory you would gain if, under such provocation, you ruled your temper and were calm. Solomon says, "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." Good temper is an inestimable blessing, both in the workshop and out of it. If people thought more of its value, they would be at more pains to secure it. It was a saying of the great Addison, we think, that a good temper was worth five hundred a year. The Christian workman knows how it is to be got. When not a natural gift, it must be planted and watered by God in the soil of a regenerated nature.

We well remember the words in which a man of this kind once spoke to us of the benefit of prayer in the morning before going to his work. "If for nothing else," he said, "it is invaluable for calming the temper. I might find," he said, "when I went to my bench, that some one had been interfering with my tools, and that I could not get what I wanted. Or the foreman might come round and blame me for something which I felt was not deserving blame. Or some of my fellow-workmen might be angry at me, and load me with abuse. All that is very irritating, and at one time it would have

set me a-blaze. But when I prepare myself for it by prayer, I feel I have got a shield to resist it, and my time passes pleasantly and calmly."

(2.) Be careful not to irritate the temper of others. When a man is discovered to be weak in temper, he is often made the *butt* of his fellow-workmen. This is savage sport. It is like the bull-baitings of Spain. The writhings and tossings of the infuriated bull under the attacks of the dogs are the sport of the spectators. The writhings of a man out of temper under the assaults of his comrades are an equally coarse and savage sport. Foolish though it be in him to lose his temper, it is a fact that he does so. Then, the effect is to produce more of that feeling of alienation to which we have so often adverted as the curse of workshops. Less systematically, too, there is often much provocation given to weak tempers. If workmen are their own friends, they will try to avoid this. Give unnecessary offence to none, but rather bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

(3.) Oaths, imprecations, and indecent language, should be most carefully avoided. We might say much of the awful sin of profanity, and illustrate the tendency of this hell-born practice to degrade this fair world to the level, and pollute its atmosphere with the exhalations, of hell. In this place, how-

ever, we merely remark, that the practice of cursing and swearing is a sign of weakness, and, if it did not call for pity, would be sure to awaken contempt. It is a proof that those who practise it have no command over higher and more refined means of influencing others. It is a very frequent accompaniment of bullying, and serves the bully as a handy tool. Take an instance from the early life of George Stephenson : "A man named Straker was a great bully, a coarse swearing fellow, and a perfect tyrant among the women and children. He would go tearing into old Nanny the huckster's shop in the village, and demand, in a savage voice, 'What's your best ham the pund ? What's floor the hunder ? What d'ye axe for prime bacon ?' His questions often ending with the miserable order, accompanied with a tremendous oath, of 'Gie's a penny row (roll) and a bawbee herrin !' The poor woman was usually set all of a shake by a visit from this fellow. He was also a great boaster, and used to crow over the robbers whom he had put to flight; mere men in buckram, as everybody knew. We, boys," says Stephenson, "believed him to be a great coward, and determined to play him a trick. Two other boys joined me in way-laying Straker one night at a corner. We sprang out and called to him, in as gruff voices as we could assume, to 'stand and de-

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liver.' He dropped down upon his knees in the dirt, declaring he was a poor man, with a sma' family, asking us for mercy, and imploring us as gentlemen to let him a-be. We couldn't stand this any longer, and set up a shout of laughter. Recognising our boys' voices, he sprang to his feet again, and rattled out a volley of oaths ; on which we cut through the hedge, and heard him shortly after swearing his way along the road to the yill-house."

(4.) Be careful not to force others tyrannically to adopt your plans, habits, and recreations. It is pure tyranny to persecute a fellow-workman because he will not conform to all the ways of the rest. No doubt, where many men are employed, there must be a certain uniformity in their way of working; and every intelligent workman will feel it right to conform, to a reasonable extent, to the practice of the shop. But to persecute a man because he will not conform in every thing to the habits of the rest—because he will not drink with them, nor be amused at their coarse jests, nor enter into their conspiracies, nor, in short, be as one of them—is pure tyranny. It is a practice that deserves the sturdiest denunciation, as a piece of mean and dastardly oppression, destructive to independence of mind and improvement of every kind, especially ruinous to the young, and fitted to degrade the character of workmen wherever it prevails.

(5.) Cultivate a spirit of kindness to the young, the aged, and the infirm. Kindness shown by a workman to an apprentice is seldom or never forgotten. You may notice in the lives or letters of working men who have risen to higher stations, how affectionately they speak of those who were kind to them in their apprenticeship. It is said that in India, when a father is cruel to his son, the son comforts himself by the reflection, that he will one day be stronger than his father, and able to turn him out of doors. The father grows old and weak, the son strong and active, and very probably the aged father becomes the drudge of the household, or is exposed to death on the banks of the Ganges. In some workshops, a system prevails scarcely less civilized. The journeymen tyrannizes over the apprentice; and when the apprentice turns journeyman, and the journeyman a feeble old man, the tables are turned, and the frail old man becomes the drudge of the establishment. But a right Christian spirit will change all that. A kind and considerate spirit to the young, secures kindness in turn from them to yourselves in your old age. A kind and considerate spirit to the aged and infirm, wins the gratitude of their children and their children's children. The whole establishment is then pervaded by the spirit of kindness and love. Young hearts, instead of being crushed by untimely

oppression, expand with all their native buoyancy ; and old age, instead of being querulous and crusty, still shows some traces of the glee and gladness of youth. The able-bodied and generous-minded workman, diffusing his benevolent regard to both old and young, becomes, like the firm and stately oak, that at once shelters the venerable tree beside it from the fury of the hurricane, and rears to strength and maturity the tender sapling under its grateful shade.

## CHAPTER IV.

### "A FAIR DAY'S WAGE FOR A FAIR DAY'S WORK."

"Depend upon it, the interests of classes too often contrasted are identical, and it is only ignorance which prevents their uniting for each other's advantage. To dispel that ignorance, to show how man can help man, ought to be the aim of every philanthropic person."—*Prince Consort's Speeches*.

THAT the labourer is worthy of his hire no one can or dares to deny; but what the hire is of which he is worthy, or on what principle the amount of it is to be settled, is one of those questions which of late years especially have been discussed almost *ad infinitum*, and on which we seem to be about as far from a settlement as ever. "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," is just another formula for expressing the same thing; every one grants it in general terms; but when you grapple with the practical question, what is a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, one man says one thing, and another, another; and particularly, the worker of the work and the payer of the wage entertain very different opinions. Political economy has its ready answer—and there is at least one great merit in that answer

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—its clearness and conciseness : a fair day's wage for a fair day's work is just what it will bring in the market ; it is the auction value of it ; the smallest amount at which workmen will consent to sell their labour, and the largest which employers will consent to pay for it. Wages, we are told, must depend on the law of supply and demand. When work is plentiful and hands are few, wages must and will be high ; when work is scarce and hands are plentiful, wages must and will be low. This, according to Political Economy, is the great law of nature, and it should be left to settle the question. As a general principle, this is doubtless correct. The law of supply and demand must be the great regulator of wages. Any violent or artificial interference with this rule must in the end defeat its object, and lead to mischief. But it is still a question whether the law of supply and demand is a purely self-regulating one, whether it can be trusted to adjust itself, or whether it may not require at times a little artificial pressure —the kind of pressure which is supplied by combinations and strikes—to determine what the relation of demand to supply is at the time, what is the highest sum that employers can give, and the lowest that workmen will accept ?

For our own part, we have a strong pre-disposition to view with favour any fair and feasible plan

of increasing the earnings of workmen. Many, no doubt, receive very handsome remuneration ; but on the other hand, many are underpaid, and have not a sufficient average share of the good things with which God has blessed the community. We say this, well remembering that all cannot be ladies and gentlemen ; all cannot attain to a refined and easy mode of life ; the vast majority must continue to be hard workers, content with mere food and raiment, hewers of wood and drawers of water. This is the inexorable law of Providence, and it were about as wise to try to change the law of gravitation as to interfere with this. Nor do we forget what an immense amount of the aggregate wages of workmen is wasted, and how much better it would be for tens of thousands of them, who lavish their earnings on drink, if they were far poorer than they are. But what we look to is this. The present average wages of many trades are barely sufficient to enable even steady and sober men, who waste nothing, and who have families dependent on them, to live with a due regard to their health, physical and moral. For example, no family where there are sons and daughters past the age of ten or twelve can be brought up as they ought to be, in a house having fewer than three sleeping apartments, one for the parents, one for the sons, and one for the daughters. Such

houses are, no doubt, as we shall show afterwards, within the reach of the better paid class of skilled workmen, but they are beyond the reach of a great many. Again, the present circumstances of workmen in time of sickness are often very deplorable. Usually, there is no possibility of procuring for the sick one in a workman's family, the attention, the seclusion, the comforts which are required. Hospitals are a great blessing, and do a world of good ; but they are little more than second-class substitutes for a more natural method ; for, doubtless, it is the law of nature that the mother should nurse her own sick child, and that the wife or daughter should minister at the sickbed of her husband or her father. Again, there is a very critical time in the history of large families, apt to tell very seriously upon the health and spirits of the mother,—when the children are young and earning nothing, when the family wants demand a great expenditure of money and toil and attention ; the mother's own health is perhaps delicate ; her spirit gets oppressed by the load ; perhaps she loses self-control, and everything falls into confusion. If her means were more ample, and she could procure some assistance, this crisis might be got over more safely. It is the same scarcity of means that creates the temptation to send out children to work when mere

infants, and before they have acquired the very rudiments of education. Still another thing is, that many workmen in old age die, as it were, upon their feet ; they have not the means of taking work easily when heart and flesh faint and fail ; their last years of life are often a living martyrdom ; many of them drag themselves to work when they ought more properly to be in bed. We have heard the widow, beside the dead body of her old man, describe, with a simple pathos that would have touched any one's heart, the mortal struggle of his last years between the desire to work, and the cruel grip of disease ; and tell how of an evening, when he was later than usual of coming home, she would go out to meet him, and find him resting on the parapet of a railing, struggling for breath ; and how, after he had recovered himself a little, they would both totter along, till they reached their humble home, whose only comfort consisted in the blessing of God, and the simple, honest affection which they bore to one another. We are far from saying that prudent and careful Christian men and women may not do a great deal to lessen these evils. A very great deal, unquestionably, they may do, as we shall try to show a little further on. But apart from that, the question demands attention—is there any lawful way of influencing the general arrangements of so-

society in favour of workmen ; any mode of making their wages somewhat higher, and their work somewhat less ; of bringing the day's work and the day's wages nearer to an equality, nearer to what is the desirable condition of the working man's family in an enlightened age and a Christian land ?

Let us look candidly at some of the plans that have been proposed, and, in some instances, carried into effect, with a view to this end.

First, there is the plan of trades'-unions, combinations, and strikes. Workmen, under this plan, feeling that individually they are weak and helpless, and lie too much at the mercy of capitalists, form themselves into trade societies, which are designed to give to their members the strength that comes from union, and to afford them protection and aid in every important matter where their interests are at stake. In particular, these unions are designed to aid the workmen in any dispute that may arise between them and their employers as to the rate of wages, the hours of labour, the number of apprentices, and the regulations of the trade generally. When disputes arise between employers and employed, it is usually attempted to get them amicably settled ; but in the event of refusal by the employers to come to terms, recourse is had by the men to *the strike*, which, by throwing the capitalist on his beam-ends,

is expected to force him into the terms of the union. It is true that trades'-unions, in addition to this, often make provision for their members in time of sickness; aid in transferring them and their families from one part of the country to another, when they require to remove; and, in some cases, also assist them to emigrate. In these latter respects the good which they have done is beyond dispute. But these objects must be left out of view in judging of the bearing of such societies on the point now immediately before us—the amount of remuneration for the labour of workmen. The question is, Have trades'-unions and strikes had the effect of improving the condition of British workmen, and raising the wages of labour?

The inquiry resolves itself into two questions; the one economical, the other moral. It may be best, in the few remarks we have to make, to keep these separate. As to the economical question—the nett result of trades'-unions and strikes on the remuneration of working men—the subject is yet involved in such clouds of debate as almost frighten one from approaching it. The Social Science Association, at its meeting at Bradford in 1859, appointed a committee to investigate the subject, and an elaborate report and documents, filling an octavo volume, was the result of the committee's labours. The subject

underwent a keen discussion at the meeting of the Association at Glasgow in 1860, and opposite opinions were maintained by representatives of sundry trades'-unions, on the one hand, and by those who disapproved of them on the other. The committee, whose chairman was Sir J. Kay Shuttleworth, summed up their conclusions in no fewer than nineteen propositions, which, numerous though they were, embraced no decision whatever on the great leading question—the bearing of such societies on the actual amount of the wages of labour. In fact, it was not attempted to be concealed that the great question was shirked, and its decision left over to a future time.

It would be presumptuous in a mere onlooker to attempt to decide so vexed a question. We shall do little more than indicate our opinion that trades'-unions have on the whole a tendency to increase the wages of labour, and in this respect are beneficial to a limited extent to working men. It is true that many strikes have failed to accomplish their immediate object. But success can only attend a strike when two conditions meet: first, when the workmen are in the right; and second, when they can hold out longer than their employers. If the workmen be wrong as to the merits of the dispute; that is to say, if the employers positively cannot afford to give in

to their demands, the strike of course must ultimately terminate against the workmen. Or if the workmen have not the means of continuing the struggle long enough, in that case too, they must fail of their immediate object. But looking at the general tendency of strikes economically, it must be admitted, we think, to be in favour of workmen. They make employers more careful not to provoke such a movement; they make them more prompt in giving their workmen the benefit of larger profits in good times; the fact of a possible strike in the background no doubt gives immense force to the workmen's demands. On the other hand, trades'-unions among the men may give rise to combinations among the masters, and strikes on the one side have their counterpart in locks-out on the other. And further, when any branch of trade is much threatened by strikes, that circumstance must tend to prevent capitalists from embarking in a business where so great derangements may occur.

But even in an economical point of view, any benefit that strikes may bring is subject to a frightful discount from the tremendous suffering and sacrifice through which they drag workmen and their families at the time. This is a fearful subject, yet not without a sort of lurid glory in the eyes of some. The self-devotion of many working people in this cause

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is something wonderful. They have poured their hard-earned wages into the union-treasury with a prodigality that reminds us of the profusion with which North and South have alike supported the civil war in America. They have returned to the charge again and again, almost before the wreck and debris of former conflicts had been cleared away. They have shown a measure of self-denial and endurance in carrying out their strikes that have afforded the clearest evidence of the earnestness of their purpose and the sincerity of their faith. The very disregard in which they have been accustomed to hold the more visible and immediate results, has only shown that they expected ultimate benefits from them so great as to entitle them to look back on this baptism of blood, not only without shame, but with pride.

If the economical benefit of the trades'-union and strike to the working man must be largely discounted in consideration of the sufferings and sacrifices attending them, a still larger deduction must be made, on account of the *moral evils* with which they are unhappily connected. It is from the Christian point of view that we are here professing to consider what tends to the welfare of working people; and in this light, the moral evils that have usually accompanied trades'-unions and strikes are of a very serious character.

For, in the first place, the very existence of these things has sprung from an uncomfortable, not to say unchristian relation between masters and men. Instead of being to each other as fathers and children, or rather, let us say, as brothers and partners, having the same interests, and animated by a common desire to advance one another's good, they have too often been ranged against each other as enemies, and have watched one another with the keen eye of combatants, each prepared to seize whatever he could wrest from the grasp of the other. The men have mistrusted the master, and the master has mistrusted the men. The union, and especially the strike, have a powerful tendency to embitter this state of feeling, and to make it all but impossible for the workman to cherish a Christian spirit. Where the hostile spirit has been prevalent, masters have often been grievously to blame. The cold manner in which they have treated their workmen, driving them off into an attitude of suspicion and opposition, has been the real cause of strikes. In some cases it has been observed that the workmen of masters who have treated them in a Christian spirit have refused to strike, even when all others were on strike around them. And in other cases workmen have felt it a cruel necessity, when, in deference to the governing authorities of their union, they have been

forced to strike against a master whose treatment of them has been most kind and considerate. The general and hearty adoption of a Christian spirit in the bearing of masters towards their men would, we believe, bring strikes to a speedy end.

Another of the moral evils usually attendant on strikes, is the persecution which the members of unions are tempted to practise towards those who are not members, and who are not willing to submit to their rules. Here, again, a most bitter and unchristian spirit of enmity is apt to be engendered. Even within the last few years, there have been instances of the most cruel and dastardly treatment of "scabs." We know, indeed, few things that would be more difficult than for a workman on strike to show a Christian spirit towards another workman in the same trade willing to work on the forbidden terms. The temptation to act in an unchristian way is so strong that the conscientious workman must feel it one of the greatest trials of his life to steer his course right in such circumstances.

Still another objection to the moral bearings of strikes is connected with the character of the men by whom the functions of leadership have often, though not always, been discharged. On this subject, let us turn to the autobiography of Hugh Miller, and get the benefit of his experience. The

period to which his reminiscences refer was that which immediately succeeded the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824, when workmen's unions became legal for the first time, and when the promoters of them were revelling in those excesses that often accompany the sudden acquisition of liberty. He was working as a journeyman mason at Niddrie, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and was urged by his companions to join in a strike which they were trying to organize. Greatly to the surprise and disappointment of his friends, he refused to have anything to do with it. His great objection was to the way in which combinations were conducted, not so much to the thing itself. "I saw enough," he says, "to convince me that, though the *right* of combination, abstractly considered, is just and proper, the strikes which would result from it as consequences would be productive of much evil and little good; and, in an argument with my friend, William Ross" (who acted as clerk for a combined society of house-painters), "I ventured to assure him that his union would never benefit the operative house-painters as a class, and urged him to give up his clerkship. 'There is a want,' I said, 'of true leadership among operatives in these combinations. It is the wilder spirits that dictate the conditions; and pitching their demands high, they begin usually by enforcing

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acquiescence in them on the quieter and more moderate among their companions. They are tyrants to their fellows ere they come into collision with their masters, and have thus an enemy in the camp, not unwilling to take advantage of their seasons of weakness, and prepared to rejoice, though secretly, mayhap, in their defeats and reverses. And, further, their discomfiture will be always quite certain enough when seasons of depression come, from the circumstance that, fixing their terms in prosperous times, they will fix them rather with reference to their present power of enforcing them, than to that medium line of fair and equal adjustment on which a conscientious man would plant his foot, and make a firm stand. Men such as you, able and ready to work on behalf of these combinations, will of course get the work to do, but you will have little or no power given you in their direction; the direction will be apparently in the hands of a few fluent *gabbers*; and yet even they will not be the actual directors—they will be but the exponents and voices of the general mediocre sentiment and inferior sense of the mass as a whole, and acceptable only so long as they give utterance to that; and so ultimately exceedingly little will be won in this way for working men. It is well that they should be allowed to combine, seeing that combination is permitted to

those who employ them ; but until the majority of our working men of the south become very different from what they now are, greatly wiser and greatly better, there will be more lost than gained by their combinations.'"

In this last sentence, Hugh Miller, with his usual sagacity, lays his finger on the true *desideratum* for the successful operation of combinations. The men must become wiser and better : wiser, so as to judge more correctly on what occasions there is just and good ground for making a stand ; and better, that when the stand is made, it may be maintained in a Christian spirit. Let these conditions be fulfilled, and trades'-unions will work for good. It is gratifying to know that many of the most intelligent friends of trades'-unions are themselves impressed with this conviction. The committee of the Social Science Association dwell with pleasure on the obvious and earnest desire now apparent to avoid or mitigate the moral evils hitherto attendant on the quarrels between masters and men. The United Joiners of Glasgow urge that full publicity should be given to all the proceedings of trades'-unions, and reporters should be present at the monthly and quarterly meetings. They propose also, that all trades should have a court of arbitration, for the settlement of dis-

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putes likely to arise between employers and employed, so as to avoid the barbarous remedy of a strike, and the frightful amount of misery that follows in its train. The advancing influence of Christianity seems to be fast placing the strike in the same category among trades as war among nations,—a last and frightful remedy, not to be thought of till all peaceful methods of adjusting quarrels have been exhausted, and patience and forbearance have reached their utmost limit.

From the stormy and troubled waters of combinations and strikes, we make our escape with pleasure to a calmer region and a clearer sky. Another mode of improving the resources of workmen is coming every day into more and more notice,—the plan, we mean, of CO-OPERATION. Perhaps the best way of introducing this subject, and showing its bearing upon the condition of working people, is to give a brief account of its actual history, since it came into operation at Rochdale, in Lancashire, some twenty years ago.

In 1844, a society of working men in Rochdale set up a small store for the sale of provisions and clothing, on the principle of being at once buyers and sellers, and thereby securing to themselves the profit usually derived from the wholesale purchase,

and the retail sale of these articles. So small was the stock which they could secure at first, that its whole value was but £28, and a shopkeeper of the town sneeringly remarked that he could carry it all off in a wheel-barrow. It was agreed that the whole business of the concern should be transacted for ready money only, both in buying and in selling ; and to the determined adherence of the partners to this rule, which at first was far from popular, but whose excellence has been fully established, the success of the undertaking has been mainly owing. The number of members at the beginning was but 28. It has gradually increased, and in 1863 it was no less than 4500. Each member at first took a £1 share, which he was allowed to pay up by weekly instalments. Members are now allowed to hold £200 of stock, but whatever be the number of their shares, they receive interest on them at five per cent. When members purchase goods, they pay, as has been said, in ready money. Corresponding to the amount of money paid, they receive tin tickets, marked with the sums, as vouchers of the payment, and when the profits are divided at the end of each quarter, they receive a share corresponding to the amount which the tin tickets show that they have purchased. To large purchasers this share of profits is very considerable ; and as those whose families are large are

the largest buyers, these also receive the largest share of profits. As a Lancashire man puts it—

“The more we eat  
The more we *geet* ;”

a glorious consolation to the fathers of big families. To Rochdale, and not to the “far West,” we may go—

“Where children are blessings, and he who hath most,  
Has aid to his fortune, and riches to boast ;  
Where a man is a man, if he’s willing to strive,  
The humblest may share in the fruits of this hive.”

This society has had a career of amazing prosperity, and the members have been very greatly benefited. Not only have they obtained for their money a much larger share of the necessaries of life than they could have secured by the ordinary mode of purchase, but in consequence of the rigid adherence to the system of ready-money payments, they have acquired habits of forethought and management which are of the utmost value. The society appropriates £400 a year to the maintenance of a library and four reading-rooms for the use of its members. It has given donations to the Dispensary, the Deaf and Dumb and Blind Asylums, and to the Manchester Infirmary, and has presented a handsome drinking fountain to the town of Rochdale. It has also contributed £1500 for relieving the distress in the dis-

trict. Its operations are now on a very large scale, so much so that, over the counters, its stores take, on an average, nearly £3400 a week.

The "Equitable Pioneers" (as this society called itself) has pioneered to some purpose. It has become a fruitful mother of children. The accumulated investments of its members increased beyond the need of the society itself, and it became necessary to consider how the surplus capital was to be used. The idea of starting a flour-mill occurred to some of the members. The idea was carried out. This was assuming a new character; it was entering into business as capitalists, and depending not on themselves as hitherto, but on the public as their customers. The difficulties encountered in this new speculation were very considerable. But they were overcome, and the undertaking became so successful, that, in 1863, the amount of funds invested was £41,714; the business done, £152,492; and the profits, £10,158.

Another stage of the co-operative movement was the establishment of a co-operative cotton-factory. This branch of their undertaking has also gone on successfully, although they have been obliged to relax a little their rule as to exacting cash-payments from the purchasers of their yarns. The building and its contents have cost no less than £40,000. It

should be added, that in Rochdale many other co-operative societies were called into existence by the success of the first. Amongst others, a Turkish-bath Society has been formed. Another society has for its object to build houses, at an expense of £50,000, for its members. In many other places, too, similar societies have been formed. According to a paper read by Dr. Watts of Manchester, at Glasgow, in 1860, upwards of a million sterling was invested in the co-operative companies then in operation, or in the progress of formation. There does not seem to be any peculiar difficulty in the management, or any inconvenience arising from the number of partners. In some cases, the same parties are both masters and men, employers and employed, capitalists and labourers. It was attempted to carry out this arrangement in the Co-operative Cotton Spinning Mills, but the attempt had to be abandoned. This is the difficult point in the scheme of co-operation, and it would be hardly safe, as yet, to hazard an opinion on it.

Among the distinguished men that have advocated the principle and practice of co-operation, Mr. Hill, Recorder of Birmingham, stands prominent, and the great weight which his judgment must ever carry, gives to his opinion a very high value. In a recent communication with which he has favoured us, Mr. Hill says: "The experience of two years

more than I had when I wrote the papers [for the Social Science Association], has strengthened my opinion in favour of 'Co-operative Societies.' They are now, however, on their trial, and experience will soon speak decidedly *pro* or *con*. . . . The stability of that class of co-operative societies which aims at expending an income to the best advantage, cannot, I think, be doubted, if the rules are framed on the best models, and if no laxity creep into their administration; the main point being to buy and sell rigidly for ready money. Of the class of co-operative societies whose object is to enable its members to gain an income, I cannot speak so positively as to their stability, although my hopes are very strong. Yet several important principles for their conduct are still in controversy, which causes a vibration between a *quasi-socialism* on the one side, and the constitution of a mere joint-stock company on the other. . . . The permanence of co-operation implies a steady disposition on the part of all to make some sacrifice of individual claims to the public good—meaning thereby chiefly public harmony. Manufactures and commerce carried on without regard to such a principle cease to be co-operation; while on the other hand, if too much sacrifice be demanded, the institution slides into Socialism, and like ice in a thaw, fails to bear the weight imposed on it."

Here, then, is a method of substantially benefiting the condition of the working classes, that is certainly much more full of interest and of promise than all the combinations and strikes that have ever been. Among the arrangements that mainly contribute to its success are these : the system of ready-money payment, and the fact that each member must to some extent—it may be to a very small extent—be an owner of capital. Both of these are most important arrangements, as we shall endeavour to show in our next chapter. To make the workman a capitalist, seems, to us, to lie at the foundation of every trustworthy plan for the enlargement of his means. A very good plan some will no doubt say, but how are they to get the capital ? We believe the question to be capable of a satisfactory answer, but meanwhile we must adjourn it to another chapter.

And, in the mean time, we close by saying a few words on what Dr. Chalmers, who was a great political economist as well as theologian and philosopher, regarded as the best and safest road for the elevation of the condition of workmen. The substance of his view is contained in the following passage from his work on the *Economy of Large Towns* :—“ We believe it to be in reserve for society, that of the three component ingredients in value,

the wages of labour will at length rise to a permanently larger proportion than they now have either to the profit of stock or to the value of land, and that thus workmen will share more equally than they do at present, with capitalists and proprietors of the soil, in the comforts and even the elegancies of life. But this will not be the achievement of desperadoes: it will be come at through a more peaceful medium; through the medium of a growing worth and a growing intelligence among the people. It will bless and beautify that coming period, when a generation, humanized by letters, and elevated by the light of Christianity, shall, *in virtue of a higher taste and a larger capacity than they now possess*, cease to grovel as they do at present among the sensualities of a reckless dissipation." The view held by the author of this passage was, that the true way for the working classes to raise their wages and better their condition was to rise in the scale of intelligence and worth.

Let us take an illustration of the actual operation of this law. A workman, animated by the desire to raise his family and himself to a higher platform, will strive to attain the highest degree of skill and excellence in his department of labour. As skill, steadiness, and civility increase the value of labour, he will be under a constant inducement to cultivate

these qualities. His mind will be on the alert to find out the best modes of doing his work. He will be careful both of his time and his money; most anxious to lose no time, not a day, nor even an hour; he will avoid extravagant habits, such as drinking, smoking, snuffing; he will abstain from worthless and expensive amusements, like gambling and theatre-going; and without being necessarily stingy or narrow, will often deny himself passing indulgences, with the reflection, "I can do easily without them." It is just such a man, too, that will look with favour on the scheme of co-operation we have been considering; he will regard it as a useful instrument for attaining the laudable object he has in view; its rule of ready-money payments will not frighten him; its demand for a little capital to be sunk in its business will not upset him; he will patiently and cheerfully set himself to meet all its requirements. Doubtless it is because the middle class of Scotchmen have usually had a larger share than others of these qualities, that they have in so many instances improved their worldly condition. And it is because the Irish poor have been so wanting in these qualities that they have usually handed down unimpaired to their children, the poverty, the squalor, and the misery which were bequeathed to them by their fathers.

But this reminds us that there is a Scylla as well as a Charybdis in the sea over which we are now endeavouring to steer the workman, and we must take care not to dash him against the rock of worldliness while trying to keep him clear of the gulf of waste and want. It is a difficult thing to use the world as not abusing it. Some friends of the working man, in trying to guide him to the improvement of his temporal condition, do so in a miserably worldly spirit. They speak to him as if rising in the world were the chief end of man; as if the highest possible object of life were to make a comfortable nest for one's-self and one's family,—to extract from this passing world all the good which it is capable of yielding. From the bottom of our heart, we deprecate this spirit. We know no character more contemptible than Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and no form of idolatry more withering, more fatal to everything pure and lovely and noble, than the worship of money. Where money is the chief good, all forms of miserable parsimony, all the low arts of paltry saving, will come like a cloud between the miser and his duty. Worthy parents will be left to drag out their old age in struggling penury, while their children are saving and rising in the world; brothers and neighbours waxen poor and fallen into decay, will be allowed to sigh in vain for the trifles

that would set them on their feet; and when the claims of some noble Christian enterprise are presented, ingenuity will be taxed to discover some plausible excuse for giving nothing in its support. Miserable, miserable! God forbid that anything now said should be perverted to an end so contemptible.

But difficult though it be to find the middle channel between Scylla and Charybdis, between waste and worldliness, it does exist, and may be found. On the one hand, money is not to be despised. Mr. Henry Taylor says with great truth, "The philosophy which affects to teach us a contempt of money does not run very deep; . . . there are few things in the world of greater importance. And so manifold are the bearings of money upon the lives and characters of mankind, that an insight which should search out the life of a man in his pecuniary relations, would penetrate into almost every cranny of his nature. He who knows, like St. Paul, both how to spare and how to abound, has a great knowledge; for if we take account of all the virtues with which money is bound up—honesty, justice, generosity, charity, frugality, forethought, self-sacrifice—and of their co-relative vices, it is a knowledge which goes near to cover the length and breadth of humanity; and a right measure and manner in getting, saving, spending, taking, lending,

borrowing and bequeathing, would almost argue a perfect man."

On the other hand, infinite care needs to be taken to keep money in its proper place—as a means to good, but not the good—as a servant, not a master. Economy is a good thing, but like other good qualities, it is apt to degenerate. Forethought in providing against coming evil is a good thing; but unless it be guided by a Christian spirit, it degenerates into mere confidence in the creature and independence of the Creator. Let no care bestowed on worldly concerns lead any to forget that, apart from the favour and blessing of God, this world can profit nothing. Never did our blessed Saviour ask a more solemn question than this, What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

## CHAPTER V.

### MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MONEY.

"That nothing be lost."—JOHN vi. 12.

OUR last chapter has made it pretty plain (to ourselves at least) that there is no royal road by which the working people of this, or of any other country, can spring at a bound to a position of much greater social comfort. At the same time we have seen that, though there is no *royal* road, there is a path by which, if they choose, they may gradually rise to a higher level, and enjoy an enlarged amount of social prosperity. One side of this road, one part of this plan, we have already tried to describe; but the description is incomplete until we speak of another.

The leading principle that we would now lay down is, that the social elevation of workmen as a class does not depend merely on their earning higher wages, but also on their turning to the best account what they actually earn; in other words, if workmen would rise as a class, they should look, not only

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to their earnings, but also to their expenditure. If they do so, we believe they are likely to find, in the first place, that what they actually earn may, as a general rule, be spent more profitably; and, in the second place, that this wiser expenditure will react favourably upon their earnings, and make these considerably greater than they are.

In entering on this subject, we know that we are treading on delicate ground. We are liable to leave behind us a very erroneous impression of our meaning. We may be represented as bringing promiscuous charges against a whole class, while we have in view but a portion of that class. Our honest endeavour to offer useful suggestions may be interpreted as an impertinent attempt to dictate. Any expression of grief at the recklessness of some, may be resented as an insult to the character of all. Knowing these dangers, we crave indulgence; and we do so the more confidently, that we believe that our general tone must make it clear that nothing can be further from our purpose than to dictate or to misrepresent.

It is impossible to deny that a vast amount of workmen's earnings, squeezed from human thews and sinews, is put, as soon as earned, into a bag with holes. First and foremost among the causes of this gigantic mis-spending are the drinking habits

of a large proportion of workmen. The facts that have again and again been given to the public in illustration of this, are utterly overwhelming. At a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Edinburgh in 1851, Mr. Porter first gave publicity to a fact that ever since has, in forms innumerable, been exciting the amazement of the world. It is, that the working men of the United Kingdom consume every year upwards of twenty millions' worth of spirits, upwards of twenty-five millions' worth of beer, and upwards of seven millions' worth of tobacco—making, in all, £53,413,165 sterling !

Mr. Clay, of Preston, in analysing carefully the expenditure of 131 workmen employed in one mill, found that their gross earnings were £154, 16s. a week, and that of that sum £34, 15s. was spent in liquors. Excluding twelve, who were teetotallers, it was found that the average yearly expenditure of the rest was £11, 7s. 9d. each, while fifteen spent upwards of 25 per cent. of their earnings on drink, and forty-one more from 25 to 75 per cent. Mr. William Chambers mentions, in his tract on *Mis-expenditure*, that several years ago, in visiting a large printing-office in London, he was struck with the amount of beer supplied for the workmen, and ascertained that few of them spent less than a shilling a day on beer,

making an expenditure for each, on that article alone, of £18 a year. In an ironwork at Sunderland, a man was pointed out to him, who at one time earned a guinea a day, or from £300 to £400 a year, but having spent all on drink, he was reduced to a lower department, with a guinea a week in place of a day. In another work, a Frenchman was pointed out to him who earned £5, 10s. a week, but by exercising economy, he was on the way to realize a competency, with which he would probably return soon to his native country.<sup>1</sup>

Of all wasteful and improvident workmen, none perhaps can surpass the navvy. A civil engineer, acquainted with railway undertakings, has calculated that navvies usually spend on drink from 7s. to 8s. a week each, and that on an average, for every mile of railway, upwards of £1000 has been squandered in liquor. If the railways of the United Kingdom extend to 10,000 miles, this would give the vast sum of ten millions as thrown away on drink in their construction. We say deliberately, thrown away (and if thrown away, it is worse than

<sup>1</sup> French and German workmen have frequently more economy and forethought than English. The author of *Workmen and their Difficulties* mentions a remarkable instance of this. A French workman, in the employment of Chance Brothers, Birmingham, receiving the unusually high wages of £10 a week, was found on leaving to have accumulated in the hands of his master no less a sum than £5000, while no Englishman at the time had more than £50.—(P. 150.)

thrown away), because, if medical testimony and wide experience be worth anything, it is certain that the habitual use of strong drink and tobacco, by men in good health, and in the full enjoyment of their physical powers, is not only not a benefit, but an injury.

If working men, between the age of eighteen and thirty, would only practise a careful economy, more would be done by far than can be done by any other social arrangement for elevating their condition and enlarging their comfort. Observe, we do not say by any other means whatever, but by any other social arrangement.

Young men have often been termed the hope of their country, and the hope of the Church. In a moral and religious point of view, the crisis of a young man's life usually arrives before the age of twenty. What one is to be during the whole of life depends mainly, in nine cases out of ten, on what one is before twenty. This consideration gives a solemn and overwhelming interest to a period of life where the temptations to carelessness are very numerous. Too often, young men do not realize the necessity of being in earnest at all till they have passed that period. But to pass that period is to lose a tide the like of which never returns; none are more sensible of this than those who have let

youth slip past before they began to be earnest ; in after years, when they did turn over a new leaf, such persons have never ceased to regret the advantages which they lost, and the evils which they suffered.

It is but another application of the same great truth, to affirm that the elevation of the great body of working men depends more upon the way in which workmen from eighteen to thirty dispose of their earnings, and conduct themselves generally, than upon any other economical consideration. That class of workmen, we firmly believe, hold in their hands the destiny of their body as a whole. We wish, at the outset, to make this statement as emphatic as possible. You may judge afterwards whether we make out the proof of it or not. Young men at that age are often prevented by modesty from appreciating the influence they may exert, and the good they may do.

But to proceed. The period of life which we have named is that during which it is least difficult for the working man to save something from his earnings. In most cases, the young journeyman earns as much as other workmen ; but his necessary expenditure is much more limited. Until he is married, he has commonly but himself to maintain ; and for a few years after marriage, his children are

young, and cost comparatively little. If he live then as he must live some years after, it is surely no extravagant supposition that, wages being good and steady, he may lay past a sum of 3s. a week. This sum, at the end of the period in question, if judiciously invested, would amount to considerably upwards of £100; and if every working man, or nearly every working man in the kingdom, were owner of such a sum, and were moreover a man of such character and habits as the possession of it in these circumstances would imply, it is not difficult to see that something like a revolution in the social condition of the working classes would be realized.

For in truth, there is nothing of a worldly kind that so holds down the working classes as their being from hand to mouth—and nothing that would so better their condition in a hundred ways as the possession of a little capital. At present, if a working man sees a favourable opening to commence business on his own account, where a little capital is needed, he is merely tantalized by the thought how entirely beyond his power is the situation which would have suited him so well. If a difference with his employer throws him idle, he, and it may be thousands more, are cast on the precarious supplies of the trade-union,—a supply not sufficient to keep the best of his property from the pawnshop, or to

prevent him from running into debt with his tradesmen. Let the cause of his difficulty be what it may, nothing is more helpless than the condition of a working man, with a family depending on him, even after the immediate difficulty has passed away. For the difficulty has left sundry legacies behind it. Sunday-clothes worn out, and no means of replacing them ; debt to tradesmen, with all the disadvantages of a system of credit ; the necessity of resorting to some club-shop where clothes or other goods may be obtained, at an advance perhaps of twenty-five per cent., on condition of the price being paid up in weekly instalments—such things keep a man in perpetual trouble—doom him, to speak plainly, to a state of slavery. The man in truth is not a free agent. He may hear of employment to be got at a distance on highly favourable terms, but for want of the means of transport, he cannot reach the place ; he may wish to emigrate, but for want of money the notion is impracticable ; he may have a highly talented child, whom a good education would be sure to advance, but the other children are coming on, and this one must be put out at the earliest period to any employment where he can earn his bread. Practically, the difference between having nothing, and having a hundred pounds, is the difference between slavery and freedom. It may sound

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strange for a minister of the Gospel to urge men to try to save money, but surely it is not strange to urge them to work out their freedom. We are firmly convinced that what we have recommended is in harmony with the will of God; provided always (as we urged in the last chapter), the money is not prized for its own sake, and is not sought to be enjoyed or employed without the favour and blessing of God; and provided the desire to realize it is not the ruling passion, and does not interfere with the claims of justice, charity, and religion; does not destroy the spirit of geniality and godliness—in a word, does not degrade the man into the miser, the Christian into the worldling.

Suppose now, that in this spirit, young workmen generally, from eighteen to thirty, should enter into this design, and carry it fairly out;—let us consider how it would tell upon their other habits and interests. Obviously, it would be a great discouragement to drinking; the two habits could not go on together; the one must destroy the other; and it would be a great matter if the habit of saving had the start of the other; possession would prove itself nine points of the law. Moreover, the spirit of steadiness and diligence that would be sure to characterize such workmen, would make their labour more valuable, and most probably would either pre-

cure promotion in the establishment, or an advance of pay. Able to make his purchases with cash—at co-operative stores, if such existed, the workman would find his money go much further than if he were struggling with debt and credit and clubs. Avoiding the low and grovelling company in which dissipated people find their natural element, his soul would go out towards more refinement, more culture, more self-respect; this would set in motion the process already referred to as the favourite scheme of Dr. Chalmers;—becoming conscious of a higher class of wants, he would make greater efforts to have them supplied, and be at greater pains to avoid whatever would interfere with their gratification. Let us further ask which of these two classes of working men would be most accessible to the influences of religion. Experience shows beyond a doubt that the dissipated, the wasteful, the thoughtless on temporal matters, are the very least accessible to spiritual truth. They form a class among whom hardly one regular church-going family can be found. They are the heart-breaks of the city missionary, the territorial minister, and the district visitor. Divine grace can reach the worst of them, and the voice of Him who received the chief of sinners does sometimes fall on their hearts with an electric thrill that arrests and subdues. In a time

of revival, such persons do often furnish materials for those mighty changes which, like the thunder and lightning in nature, seem designed to startle a slumbering world into a sense of the awful power of God. But the quieter and more ordinary influences of Divine grace, corresponding to the more silent and constant forces in the kingdom of nature, do not take effect on these wasteful masses. Careless of their future in the life that now is, they are still more reckless of the eternal hereafter; neither fearing God nor regarding man, they seldom look beyond the passing moment, and will not listen to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. In the case of steady and well-doing men, it is certainly easier to ape religion, to have the religious skin covering the ungodly heart. And this no doubt is often the case. But well-conditioned families lie much more directly open to the ordinary influences of Divine grace; and in point of fact, they are ever recruiting the Church with some of its steadiest members and healthiest blood. Formalism and hypocrisy may no doubt be often found on such soil; but it is at the same time the good ground, where the seed may come best to maturity, and yield thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold.

One of our chief reasons for urging upon young workmen to lay up a store of money during their less

encumbered years is, that they may thereby be effectually deprived of all ground or temptation for running into debt. On this point we would now speak a few earnest words. Debt, in cases innumerable, is the working man's cancer. And to speak candidly, there is too much cause to fear that it is widely prevalent among the class. No doubt it prevails chiefly among the drunken and dissipated; but even among others it is apt to get a footing, and once it lays its grip upon any one, it is no child's play to force it off. We have been told that in the letter-boxes of some public works, it is no uncommon thing to find dozens of summonses against workmen in the employment of the company. In a single year lately there was in Glasgow the almost incredible number of 30,000 cases in which wages were arrested for debt.<sup>1</sup> The practice had become so common, and the annoyance to employers had become so great, that they petitioned Parliament to repeal the law which allows creditors to arrest wages in the hands of employers for small debts. It is difficult to say whether the social or the moral and spiritual evils caused by a state of debt and embarrassment are the more numerous. Credit must always be an expensive system. To the working man it is quite ruinous. Driven to shops where credit is allowed, but where

<sup>1</sup> Social Science Association, 1860. Paper by Geo. Anderson, Esq.

a far higher price is charged to cover the increased risk and loss, he pays probably one-third or one-half more for the necessaries of life than if he purchased them at ready-money stores. We have seen it stated that a man with only 12s. a week would save £5 a year by paying in ready money. Seldom furnished with a spare article of clothing, he or his children have often to wear their best, when a cheaper and coarser article would be far more to the purpose. A frequent customer of the pawnshop, he both loses, for long periods of time, the benefit of the articles he has acquired, and pays a heavy price for the accommodation which the pawnbroker affords. Sometimes he must realize any property he may have at any price, to meet a pressing emergency. The costs of the summons added to the original debt often plunge him into aggravated difficulties. For want of the rent at term-time, he may have to quit a house healthful and convenient for his work, and thrust himself into any hole, however distant, however uncomfortable, however wretched in point of neighbours, where he can find an open door.

These are but samples of the social evils of a state of debt; the moral and spiritual form a not less ugly list. First, there is loss of character, and deservedly; for he who culpably withholds his due from another is an evil-doer, an unjust man, the

author of a wrong. There may be ground for compassion for him, and it may be true that when he incurred the obligation, he did not intend to commit the wrong, he intended to act honourably ; but it is not less true that he has done the wrong, and is doing it ;—in point of fact, therefore, he is a doer of evil. He and his class are grievous enemies of the poor man ; it is his practice that makes the poor man's rent so high, and many of the articles of daily life so dear : honest men have to pay for the dishonest ; and landlords and dealers have to make their terms exorbitant, that what they lose by the one they may make up by the other. Further, there is nothing more likely to break down a man's truthfulness, and to promote the spirit of deceit and falsehood, than a state of money-embarrassment. There is hardly a situation in the world in which it is more difficult to be truthful than that of a debtor pressed by creditors, and eager to keep up appearances. We do not know that one man in a hundred is able to stand this ordeal ; the temptation is so overpowering to represent things as better than they are, to make promises which he cannot fulfil, and even give solemn assurances which are utterly untrue. It is terrible to think of the way in which a man in these circumstances learns to play loose with his conscience ; first, he persuades himself that

this is no ordinary case, that the ordinary rules of morality do not apply here, otherwise bad would rapidly become worse, the creditors would not get what they might get, everything would go at once to ruin ; he pleads with his conscience that there is a stern necessity for his using a little freedom with truth. At first he does it painfully and reluctantly ; but by and by easily and freely, till even he himself gets startled and horrified at the length to which he has gone. This state of embarrassment is a state of constant worry ; and as in every case of worry, the temper is apt to get sharp and impatient, and a craving arises for soothing draughts. Where the embarrassment does not arise from unforeseen and unavoidable causes, the whole moral and spiritual frame gets unhinged and twisted. Prayer becomes a form, the Lord's Supper a kind of hypocrisy ; and any religious comfort of former days is only recalled as a happy dream of brighter times. Often, too, debt and drinking act and react upon each other : debt produces drinking, and drinking produces debt ; and flying from the iron arms of the one to the clammy embrace of the other, the poor workman often rolls and tumbles over between them into a premature grave, leaving widow and children to scramble, as they best may, for the means which he was bound to provide.

Honour then the rule of the New Testament : "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." As much as lieth in you, study to "provide things honest in the sight of all men." In order to this, allow me to counsel two things : one is,—in all your buying and selling, your spending, your lending and your borrowing, acknowledge God. Submit everything to His inspection, and court in everything His approval. And do not fancy in so doing that you are dealing with a hard and rigorous Master, but with a kind and considerate Father. God knows all the poor man's difficulties, and if he would believe it, He feels deeply for him. Jesus knows the poor man's lot, and in his pinched and straitened home at Nazareth, He experienced all the hardships of the poor man's family. "We have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; . . . let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace." 'He that prays and has confidence in his Father has his heart wonderfully kept up in the very thickest difficulties ; and when the heart is kept up, the head keeps clear, and the nerves firm, and order is maintained, and there is a cheering word for his partner, whose knees are beginning to totter ; and both thank God and take courage, and rally and return to the fight ; and with that great battle-cry, "The Lord of hosts is with

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us," they charge the hosts of temptation, and return to the hard but honourable path of honest poverty and patient toil.

The other counsel we would give, in order to avoid debt, is, to try to do without what you have not at the time the means of providing. In many cases, it is to be feared, persons run into debt, by procuring luxuries and finery, while they can barely afford to pay for necessaries. This is more than thoughtlessness, it is positive and flagrant dishonesty. Ornaments and finery worn at the expense of justice, charity, and piety, have the devil's mark upon them. A curse goes with them that will one day make its sting felt in the wearer's heart. How infinitely better, rather than run the risk of that curse, to learn to say, as often as the desire rises in the heart for things beyond reach of the purse—"never mind, we can do without them."

If the working man has been fortunate enough to accumulate a sum of money, or if he is in the course of doing so, an important question arises, What is the best mode of investing it? The question is important, because, of the modes that offer themselves, some are extremely undesirable. From time to time, the newspapers have a sad tale to unfold of workmen, tradesmen, governesses, and others (whose sav-

ings represent an enormous amount of self-denying frugality), being induced to invest their all in the bubble scheme of heartless speculators, that bursts in a few months, without leaving a wreck behind. In general, it may be assumed that any tempting prospects of unusually large returns for money are attended with increased risks, and are therefore unsuitable as investments for the working classes. Misled by such tempting offers, many have discovered, at the very time when they hoped to be enjoying the fruits of their industry, that the whole was inevitably lost.

The following are some of the plans that present themselves as suitable to the circumstances of the working classes :—

1. SAVINGS' BANKS, when guaranteed by the national security, have the benefit of great safety, great convenience, and almost constant accessibility. The recent multiplication of these institutions in connexion with the Post Office, has brought them within reach of persons resident in all parts, whether of town or country. At any time during the hours of business, they receive deposits from a shilling upwards ; they pay a fair rate of interest, usually better than other banks ; while the depositor has complete control over the money, and may at any time withdraw it in whole or in part. If a lad of eighteen

were to commence depositing a shilling weekly, and to continue doing so to the age of sixty, he would by that time have paid in the sum of £109, and, besides this, he would be entitled to upwards of £80 of interest. If his deposit were two shillings a week, the sum to which he would be entitled would be close on £400. Even in cases where it is not designed to keep the money constantly in the Savings' Bank, it affords the opportunity of depositing it in weekly or other instalments until it shall have accumulated to the sum necessary for some other investment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps we cannot convey a better idea of the benefits of the Savings' Bank than by quoting the following letter from a young man, that appeared a few years ago in the columns of an Edinburgh magazine :—“Arriving at Edinburgh about three years ago, with difficulty, like many strangers, I succeeded in getting a little to do, when an acquaintance suggested the great importance of depositing now and then a few shillings in the Savings' Bank, mentioning what a blessing it would prove to be in the event of sickness or accident. I thought it was foolishness for me to imagine to save any money, when my wages would not average five shillings a week—at other times perhaps not three—never exceeding ten and sixpence. However, I formed a resolution, and made what I thought a great effort, entering the Savings' Bank, for the first time, on the 15th of February 1844, depositing six shillings. Shortly thereafter I entered service; from which time I had stately eleven shillings a week, afterwards increased to twelve. Instead of getting my wages on Saturday, I generally got it on Monday, proceeding immediately to the Savings' Bank with a little. It matters little what sum may be brought there; the poor man's shilling is as welcome as the rich man's pound. I would urge all those who may deposit any portion of their savings, to see the necessity of doing so on receiving; for, as my own experience taught me, if delayed on Monday, the consequence was, it was not done at all—there are so many temptations in the way leading a man

2. Another plan that offers itself for receiving the savings of the working classes is that of FRIENDLY SOCIETIES. These societies usually propose, 1<sup>st</sup>, to provide members with an allowance during sickness; 2<sup>d</sup>, to pay for funerals; and, 3<sup>d</sup>, to provide an annuity for old age. It appears that the progress of these societies has been sadly impeded by the want of that security which attends savings'-banks. Not a few friendly societies have become bankrupt at the very time when members were attaining old age, and expecting to enjoy the fruits of past economy. For that reason, it is strongly recommended that from doing good. About two years and a half soon passed away, till, on the 17th November 1846, I became sick, confined to bed, a medical gentleman regularly in attendance twice a day. So far as I remember, there were only a few shillings in my possession at the time, which speedily disappeared. I lay on bed, imagining what I should have done if this pittance were all which I had laid up against the day of sickness, or any other event that might happen; now placed among strangers, some hundred miles from friends, and, it may be, soon thrust out on the mercy of a reckless world, none to care for me; aggravated, no doubt, by the thought of an aged mother living on some bleak mountain's brow, looking for a little assistance from her son, when, to her sad misfortune, the half of her living had been blasted by a visitation from Providence. But, amidst all these perplexing ideas, what consolation I experienced on recalling to mind that I had laid up in the Savings' Bank the large sum (it appeared so to me) of £21, 5s. 7d.; here is a sufficient supply for me until able to work, also competent to meet the necessities of a tender mother. May I also add (not in the way of boasting) that, during the short time which I have been a depositor, I felt more disposed to give for Christian purposes than all the rest of my life. Being unable to go to the bank, I requested of my comrade to search the pocket of my coat, in which he would find a small book with a blue cover; also, please to call at the Savings' Bank for some money. He looked very

workmen should not join a friendly society having only a few members, or less than one hundred ; and likewise, that they should not join a society, the calculations of which have not been revised by an accountant or actuary, authorized by Act of Parliament to certify the tables. With the view of avoiding the risks of friendly societies, the plan of *yearly* societies has been adopted to a considerable extent. The defects of these are so obvious as scarcely to require to be pointed out. They may be of service to the operative in any slight or temporary illness ; but as the allowances grow small by degrees, and cease entirely at the end of the year, if not sooner, they give no help to old age, nor to those protracted and serious illnesses which are by far the most formidable to the working man and his family. The principle of equal rates for all the members, for the man of fifty, and the lad of fifteen, cannot be defended. The management is often such as to lead

strange, no doubt amazed to see such a large sum, in so short a time, collected by one in such circumstances ; for neither he nor my land-lady expected any more save the few shillings already mentioned. By this request I was led to understand this was the first time he entered a Savings' Bank ; but I can say now, without any hesitation, that he has gone thither since on business of his own, and will probably profit by it at some future period. I have now only to add, that I wish I had had the advantage of such a useful institution sooner." The example of this excellent youth is yet destined, we trust, to have more followers ; nothing is easier than to open an account ; and the day when wages are paid, one of the first acts of the young workman should be to attend, and make his deposit.

to want of confidence ; when the managers hold their meetings in a public-house, it is no wonder if unpleasant consequences follow. The general feeling is, that yearly societies should be superseded by permanent friendly societies ; and Parliament has passed various measures in order to give stability to the latter class of institutions.

3. A third mode of investment suitable to the circumstances of the working classes is the plan of **ANNUITIES**, immediate or deferred. Transactions of this kind are sometimes gone into by friendly societies, and sometimes by savings'-banks and assurance companies. An immediate annuity offers an annuity for life for payment of a specific sum, varying according to the age of the individual. By paying down £100, a person aged 60 will receive an annuity of about £10 a year during the rest of life ; while to one aged 70, the annual payment is about £14. But, perhaps, the plan of deferred annuities will suit the working man better. A lad of 20, by paying a shilling a week until he is 50, secures an annuity of £11, 8s. 6d. during the remainder of his life. That is, at the age of 50, he ceases to pay the weekly shilling, and receives a sum equal to more than four shillings a week. If the transaction is made with the National Security Savings' Bank, and if, at any time previous to the

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year when the annuity should commence, he should be disabled from continuing his payments, through sickness or poverty, the whole amount of his former payments, without interest, will be paid back ; and if he should die before that time, the whole of his payments, without interest, will be returned to his children or heirs. Well might an earnest friend of his workpeople say, while addressing them on this subject, "Pause here, my friends, and ask yourself how the man of fifty, in the prime of life, has placed himself in this position [of having an annuity of £11, 8s. 6d. for the rest of his days]. It is by giving every week to this society a sum not so great as nine-tenths of our young men spend in the public-house ! O when will the young men of our working population awake to a sense of their power !"

4. A fourth plan is that of LIFE ASSURANCE. Under this plan, as it is usually administered, a member makes a small annual payment during life, in consideration of which the company agree to pay to his family or representatives a certain sum at his death. For example, if a lad of 18 should pay to an assurance company £1, 11s. 4d.<sup>1</sup> annually, or 8s. quarterly, his heirs would be entitled, on his death, whenever that should happen,

<sup>1</sup> These figures are from the Tables of the "City of Glasgow Life Assurance Company;" other Tables may be slightly different.

to a sum of £100. In 1864, an Act was passed by which policies may be opened, through the Post Office, with Government, for sums not exceeding £100, nor less than £20. It may suit better the convenience of some to make their payments during a limited number of years, and some societies receive proposals accordingly. Thus, a person aged 20 at his last birthday, may insure £100 in an assurance office by paying £3, 3s. 8d. for 15 years, or £2, 12s. 1d. for 20 years ; or, a lad of 18, by a payment of £2, 0s. 6d. annually, may secure £100, payable to himself on his reaching the age of 60, or payable to his family upon his death, should that occur earlier. In the middle and upper classes, it is almost the universal practice to have a life assurance. If the practice could be introduced among the working classes, what a world of suffering would it often save ! What toil, what killing anxiety to the poor widow, suddenly bereaved of the bread-earner and head of the family, and compelled, while her heart is sinking and smarting under a terrible bereavement, to betake herself to the hardest and worst-paid toil that female hands can achieve ! In what different circumstances would even a moderate life assurance place her ! It should be borne in mind, that respectable assurance

companies will not receive proposals from persons who are not of sound health and sober habits.

5. Of recent years, two other methods of investment have sprung up for working men. One of these is the Co-operative Society, already noticed in a previous chapter. Besides serving the more immediate purpose of meeting the ordinary wants of working people at lower prices than ordinary shops, these societies have also become recipients of their savings, and that to a very considerable extent. The partners are required to hold a certain amount of the society's stock or capital, and allowed to go as far as £100. Not a few members of the original Rochdale Society hold stock to that amount. But many of them have withdrawn a considerable part of their stock for the purpose of investing it in the other concerns which have grown up out of the original Society. It appears that in two years, the money so withdrawn amounted to the very large sum of £22,830.

The other mode of investment that has recently sprung up is

6. The scheme of BUILDING SOCIETIES. These societies have been formed for the purpose of enabling workmen and small tradesmen to become proprietors of their own houses on practicable and advantageous terms. We shall have occasion to speak of them

when we come to the subject of houses for the working classes. Meanwhile we may say that, in some parts of England, these societies have had wonderful success. One cluster of societies in Birmingham have received, in small sums, upwards of half a million sterling, while the number of houses erected approaches 10,000. This is almost wholly the work of the labouring classes, of persons whose incomes range from 12s. to 40s. a week. It is found that their average investments are about £18 a year, or nearly a shilling a day for each member, a sum more than double what we have suggested in this chapter as feasible for young working men.

Throughout the whole of this chapter (which, no doubt, some persons would characterize, with a sigh, as "unco worldly") there have been floating through our mind the memorable words of Christ, when, after the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes, he directed the disciples to gather up the fragments, "*that nothing be lost.*" Instructive and significant at any time, these words of our Lord derive quite a wonderful impressiveness from the occasion on which they were uttered. It was in connexion with a miracle of creative power, when he had just shown his ability, by a mere effort of his will, to provide supplies absolutely without limit. It has been well said of this miracle : "The union of this savingness

and care with creative power is something so peculiar, that it impresses beyond all mistake a heavenly character upon the narrative. Never would such a thing have been invented. Nature, that mirror of the divine perfections, places before our eyes the same combination of boundless munificence and truest frugality in imparting her benefits." It is, indeed, a divine union,—munificence and economy. Munificence without economy is of the earth, earthly. Nothing is lost in the kingdom of nature. The refuse of one class of creatures is the life of another. Nature is ever at work forming new combinations, using up old materials, bringing them forward again in new and surprising forms of beauty. Nothing is lost in Providence. The forces that were set in motion a thousand years ago are continuing to this day to bear their fruits all over the world. Nothing is more unlike God than waste. Economy has been so much abused that the word has come to smell of dust and earth. But it ought not so to be. "Let nothing be lost" is a great rule to bind upon the conscience. No money, no time, no talent, no opportunity of good-doing or good-getting, no chapter of the Bible, no sermon, no sacrament, no affliction, no blessing! Make profit from them all!

## CHAPTER VI.

### HEALTH WITHOUT DRUGS.

"And the body, let us not neglect it. Bad health, a feeble body, is often a great obstacle to the accomplishment of our work before God. We ought to accept it when God sends it. But it is our duty before God to observe the regimen needful even for the body, and to take the precautions necessary to strengthen it for the service and for the glory of God; this thought exalts and sanctifies everything."—ADOLPHE MONOD, *Regrets of a Dying Man*.

A FRIEND of ours, who enjoys excellent health, not far from the fourscore years, and whose worldly affairs are in excellent order, has often told us, that one of his rules of life has been to try to keep his body out of the hands of the doctors, and his affairs out of the hands of the lawyers. We mean no slight to these two professions, which in their proper spheres do so much for our benefit, when we pronounce the rule an excellent one, and worthy, wherever the circumstances admit, of all imitation. The sum and substance of what we are now going to urge is, to do all you can to keep your bodies out of the hands of the doctors. Or, if this way of putting it sounds somewhat ungracious to those who discharge among us an office so difficult and important, let us express it differently. Our object is to

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urge you to do your utmost to preserve unimpaired the stock of good health with which it has pleased your Maker to bless you. Good health is a commodity of which most of us have a fair share when we begin life. Sickness, for the most part, is a foreigner, who insinuates himself, unsought and unwelcome, into our constitution. It is easier, according to the proverb, to keep out than to put out. This is true emphatically of sickness. Our counsel is to try to *keep* it out ; this is easier, cheaper, and better every way ; it is what commonly we may do without the doctors ; but if it comes in spite of all, then the doctor's aid must be sought to enable us to *put* it out. We are not forgetful of the good old rule, "Every man to his business;" we are not intruding on the doctor's province ; our desire is to get the masses to understand and observe those God-given laws on which, to a very large degree, good health depends. There are few sights more sad than a sickly workman, toiling away at the anvil or the bench, unless it be a workman's sickly wife, toiling at the wash-tub. Look at their languid eyes, and long, dejected faces ! What a priceless blessing health and strength would be to them ! How differently would they live and work if they had the conscious vigour and elastic spirits of the strong man, rejoicing to run a race ! How cheerily they

would leap forward to exertions, the thought of which is often despair!

Few things are more distressing, more heart-breaking, than the amount of sickness, and even of death, that is due to causes now ascertained to be preventable. We all lament bitterly the slaughter of war; but nothing is more certain than that the number of soldiers who are slain by preventable disease is immensely greater than the number who fall in battle. In the late Russian war, no fewer than 20,800 of our countrymen lost their lives. But of these only 5000 fell in the field or died of their wounds; no fewer than 15,800, mostly men in the prime of life, died of diseases, of which, humanly speaking, far the greater part might have been prevented, had proper means been taken. Even in times of peace, the proportion of deaths in the army has till lately been far greater than elsewhere. One of the chief causes of this mortality has been ascertained to be the want of sufficient ventilation in the soldiers' barracks. Where due arrangements have been made of late years for giving the soldiers fresh air, the death-rate has been very considerably diminished.

But out of the army, too, and especially among the working classes, there is an amount of preventable sickness and death, which is very terrible.

In a General Sanitary Report published some years ago by the Poor-Law Commissioners, it was stated that in Manchester the average age at death of professional men, gentry, and their families, is 38 years; tradesmen, 20; mechanics and labourers, 17. In Liverpool, gentry 35, tradesmen 22, workmen 15. In the rural districts of Rutlandshire the corresponding ages are 52, 41, and 38 respectively. In the district of Bethnal Green, London, gentry 45, tradesmen 26, workmen 16. The low average in the case of tradesmen and workmen, is chiefly owing to the number of deaths among children of a tender age. Among the gentry, on an average only one death out of five occurs among children under five years; among tradespeople the proportion is one in two and a quarter; and among working men one in two. That is, among the working classes of such districts, there is the same number of deaths below the age of five as above it. It is difficult to state with any approach to precision, how many lives are lost in this country through causes that might have been prevented. We have seen the number estimated variously at from 50,000 to 100,000. We believe that the larger number is no exaggeration. It is very singular that so little horror is felt at this prodigious slaughter. For the most part, human life is very properly regarded with great sanctity in

our country. We are indignant at any needless sacrifice of life. We cry shame when a crew is drowned because a miserly shipowner sent them to sea in a rotten craft. When an explosion occurs in an ill-ventilated mine, we can hardly refrain from regretting that the reckless proprietor was not himself shattered by the catastrophe. Yet for the most part little horror is felt at the far more extensive and frightful loss of life that takes place above ground from similar causes. We all remember the horror that thrilled every bosom in the land, when 200 imprisoned colliers were believed to be suffering the agonies of suffocation, and the intense anxiety that prevailed to learn their fate. Yet we can be told that ten times that number of lives are lost weekly in Great Britain through preventable causes, and fold our hands in indifference. What would be the feeling of the community if some Nana Sahib were roaming through the country, and if every week brought the revolting news of a fresh massacre of 2000? It was no palliation, but a hideous aggravation of that fiend's barbarity, that a large proportion of his victims were children. It should be no palliation of the evil which filth, bad air, and similar agents are causing, that probably one-half of their murders are those of little children. Infanticide has usually been counted the crowning barbarity of

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savage nations; culpable ignorance and neglect of the laws that promote the health and prolong the lives of children, is the disgrace of the most civilized.

It being admitted, then, that there is a vast amount of preventable sickness and death, especially among the working classes, the great thing is, to get at the reasons of this, and, having found the cause, infer the remedy. What are the chief of the subtle agencies that penetrate the frames of young and old, that poison the blood and undermine the strength, that breed consumption and fever and scrofula, that nip the young blossoms of the tree of life, that send so many little ones to sleep in the cemetery, when they might have gladdened their parents' homes with their smiles and prattle, and grown up to be comforts at home and blessings abroad? What are the enemies to health whom we must try, when young, to *hold* out, that when old we may not have to try to *put* them out? It is but a few of the principal that we can specify; and these only in a very cursory and imperfect way.

The first we mention is *polluted air*. The necessity of a constant supply of fresh air for the health of the body can only be thoroughly appreciated where there is some acquaintance with the process of respiration or breathing, and the ends which that process serves. Why are we made to breathe? Why

does our chest heave night and day, and our mouths and nostrils perpetually draw in air from without, and pour out air from within? The process is most intimately connected with the preservation of health and life. The blood that flows through our bodies, carrying, when it is healthy, fresh life and strength to every part of them, is continually gathering up in its passage a substance that is destructive, and is continually demanding a fresh supply of another substance, which is wholesome and life-giving. The process of breathing is designed for at once getting rid of the one and supplying the other. The chamber of exchange, where the blood throws out the hurtful substance, and takes in the wholesome, is the chest, the cavity of the lungs. The brokers that make the exchange are the lungs themselves. The medium of conveyance by which the one substance is carried out, and the other carried in, is the breath. The hurtful substance which is thrown out is called carbonic acid; the wholesome which is drawn in, is called oxygen. To keep the blood healthy (and that is much the same thing as to keep the body itself healthy), a certain amount of oxygen must be supplied to the blood. When this amount of oxygen is not supplied, the consequences are most serious. It may be withheld to such an extent, that death is immediately or rapidly the consequence. It was

so in the famous black-hole of Calcutta. There, 146 individuals were confined for a night in a cell 18 feet long and 14 wide, with but two small square holes for windows. In the morning, 123 of them were found dead, and the surviving 23 looked so miserable, that they could hardly be said to be alive. A similar tragedy has been known to occur at sea. In an emigrant ship on one occasion, during a violent storm, the captain, in order to keep the decks clear, and facilitate the working of the ship, sent the passengers into the hold, ordered the hatches to be fastened down, and kept them in that state all night. In the morning, when the hatches were removed, the hold was found to be full of the dead and dying. No fresh air had been supplied, no oxygen had been carried to the blood, the wretched prisoners had been forced to breathe over and over again the air which had been used already, and their miserable death, or approach to death, was the inevitable result.

In other cases, the immediate result may not be so disastrous, but a slow process of injury will be going on, which may ultimately issue in shattered health. If the breath, instead of bringing a due supply of oxygen, brings back to a large degree the carbonic acid which has already been expelled, it is evident that to that extent the nourishing or renew-

ing power of the blood will be weakened, and from this weakening process, consumption or some other disease may result. It is this evil, the breathing over again of used-up air, that is so common in crowded apartments, in sleeping - rooms, schools, churches, work-rooms, omnibuses, coaches, and the like. In the case of many, the evil makes itself quickly known by headaches, sickness, exhaustion, and a painful feeling of oppression. There are unhappily no places where it prevails more largely than churches and schools. Hearers are sometimes reproved for drowsiness, and scholars for stupidity, when, to a large extent at all events, the impure air which they are breathing is the cause.

Besides this cause of contamination, the air is liable to be made impure by other means. It is liable to be mixed with poisonous substances, that, when breathed in, and carried to the blood, deposit their poison there, and send it careering with the blood through all the body. Among the poisonous substances that have this effect, may be mentioned, the effluvia that arise from any kind of decaying matter, whether animal or vegetable; everything that gives rise to disagreeable smells; and very specially, the effluvia that come from the human body, even when it is in a state of health, and much more when it is in a state of disease. Even when

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the body is in health, both the breath and the perspiration will be charged with certain hurtful ingredients—the waste of the body—which they discharge into the surrounding atmosphere, and the inhaling of which must be injurious to others. But in a state of disease, this evil is much greater. In certain virulent diseases, the exhalations are so poisonous that those who are exposed to them are often seized with the same diseases, which are therefore said to be infectious or contagious. In these cases, the poison that goes forth from the diseased body is carried in the breath to the blood of the healthy, and prostrates them under the same disease. This is one cause why such diseases are so frightful in their ravages, running generally through whole families, and often decimating entire streets and districts.

But for all these evils the remedy, if people would use it, is very simple and very efficacious. In one word, it is ventilation, or fresh air. Nature herself is a great ventilator, and if men would but take lessons from her, they would be great ventilators too. The wind is the great ventilating apparatus of nature. By this mighty bellows she blows away whatever poisonous ingredients may at any time be deposited within her domain, and so dilutes them, so spreads them through "the empty, vast, and wandering air,"

that their power of mischief is almost entirely destroyed. In country districts there is generally less to poison the air than in towns, and the air has more free scope—it gets at things and places more readily, and thus ventilates more thoroughly; and this is one reason why the country is generally healthier than the town. But besides ventilating herself, nature, or to speak more correctly, the God of nature, has taught certain of his creatures the art. The most striking and interesting instance of this is in the case of bees. What causes the buzz which you ever hear in a bee-hive? It is not the bees flying through the hive, for their movements there are necessarily performed on foot. Examine the entrance of a beehive, and you will observe some two or three dozen of them hard at work, flapping with their wings, as if their very life depended on their efforts. And so it does. The beehive has no window, and no ventilation-tubes. The bees are far too wise to breathe over again and again the used-up air of their neighbours and of themselves. That constant flapping of the wings is just their way of introducing fresh the vital fluid on which their life and their health depend. They are not morbidly afraid of draughts, or of catching cold. No order is ever given by the queen-bee to stop the ventilator-bees, and close the openings of the hive. She knows

too well the value of fresh air to do anything so foolish. It would be like closing the hatches over the hold of a ship—a thing which is done only by the animal that naturalists characterize as *Homo Sapiens*—Man the wise.

The strong prejudice that often exists against fresh air is very lamentable. In cold weather, impure air is actually prized for its warmth; the members of families sleep in close proximity, and carefully exclude the fresh air, because it is cold and the other is warm. How little they calculate the price of the ill-gotten warmth! A man in health requires not less than 150 or 160 cubic feet of fresh air every hour. The consequence of breathing the polluted air of a room where many human beings lie huddled together is, that in the morning they awake weak and languid, and often a dram is deemed necessary to stimulate their prostrate energies. Oh but, people say, draughts of cold air are most hurtful things, bringing rheumatisms and aches and agues of every kind. It is true that if a strong current of very cold air be introduced into a room full of very hot air, and if a somewhat delicate person be sitting in the current, the effect will be bad. But this is just leaping from one extreme to the other. Ventilation should be so managed that no such current shall be formed.

The subject is one to which, as yet, architects, in planning houses, have given almost no attention whatever, otherwise it might be easy to provide ventilation without any hurtful draughts. In 1834, a building in Glasgow, called "the Barracks," was ventilated by a shaft in an ingenious but simple way. Before ventilation fifty-seven cases of typhus occurred in two months; after ventilation only four occurred in eight years. Two things we would most specially urge; and for both of them we have the most earnest advocacy of one whom all should respect—Miss Nightingale: first, that wherever a sleeping apartment is small, a portion of the window, or at least the room-door be left open during the night to admit pure air; and second, that whenever there is sickness in a room, most particular attention be paid to the ventilation. If it be otherwise, the poisonous vapours from the sickbed will fill the room, becoming more and more destructive the closer the doors and windows are kept; the feeblest will be the first to catch the infection, and these usually are the children. If inevitable disease has slain thousands, bad air has slain tens of thousands.

Kindred to bad air among the causes of disease, is *want of exercise*. Among working men, many, from the very nature of their employment, are abun-

dantly provided with bodily exercise. But others are not. Generally it is remarked that, other things being equal, the most sedentary employments are the least healthy. Clerks, tailors, dress-makers, and the like, furnish a very unusual proportion of the victims of consumption. The case of such persons, and also the case of females whose work in the family is wholly in-door, is very critical. In the case of carpenters, masons, smiths, and others, the great amount of physical exercise goes far to make up for the want of fresh air at home. For the benefit of exercise to the health lies in this, that it makes the process of breathing more rapid and more vehement; it thus introduces more fresh air into the lungs in a given time, and provides such a supply of oxygen for the blood, that the deficiency of what is provided by night in the crowded chamber is hardly felt. But pity those who, without any vigorous exercise, spend their whole days and nights in a confined and contaminated atmosphere! Every one knows the benefit, often derived in a time of sickness, from going to the country. One thing that makes the country more healthful than the town is, that more exercise is commonly taken, and more fresh air inhaled. It may often happen that persons in feeble health cannot go to the country. If so, the next best thing is to endeavour to bring the country to

them. Let them provide fresh air for the lungs, and take more out-of-door exercise; that is so far equivalent to bringing the country to them. We have known persons oppressed with headache and languor who experienced such palpable benefit from a walk, that they could reckon with almost absolute certainty, that at a certain point of the road all feeling of headache and languor would be gone. How simple, yet effective, are the remedies of nature!

*Filth* of every sort must be set down among the enemies of health. Even to enumerate all the forms in which this foe is apt to appear, would be a long process, for their name is legion. But we must briefly advert to three—affecting severally three things which it is most essential to keep clean—the skin, the clothes, and the bedding.

As to the *skin*, its structure is very remarkable, and its demand for cleanliness is most imperative. Examined with the microscope, the skin is found to be pierced with little holes, so numerous and so close that a shilling would cover several thousands, and the whole number is reckoned at three millions. Further examination shows that these holes are the mouths or openings of three millions of tubes, which, if joined together and stretched out in a line, would amount to about thirty miles. These tubes are the drains with which God has furnished the body to

carry its waste substances away. The process is carried on by perspiration, which is sometimes vehement and obvious, but more commonly silent and insensible. Dirt on the skin chokes up the openings of the three million drains, and forces their waste substances back into the body, causing a sense of discomfort and languor, at which no one who understands the matter can be surprised. Washing and cleansing the skin, on the other hand, opens the drains, allows the pipes to empty themselves freely into the air, and causes that delightful feeling of refreshment which we all associate with a bath. Here, again, the compensating benefit of exercise may be seen. Exercise promotes perspiration ; it flushes the pipes, as it were, causing them to pour out such an amount of fluid as clears the tubes of the obstruction at the mouth. But then, again, perspiration drying on the skin is apt to close them up, so that in this, as in other cases, the washing of the skin is of the greatest benefit. Nothing can be more absurd than the prejudice said to prevail among colliers, that to wash the back is to weaken it. So striking are the advantages of the application of cold water to the human frame, that within the last few years it has been proposed as a substitute for all kinds of medicines—a sort of universal cure. “The water-cure,” as it is called, owes its origin to

Priesnitz, originally a Silesian peasant, and has become exceedingly popular. Without pretending to discuss medically the claims of the system, we may give the following summary of benefits ascribed by Professor Clark of Aberdeen to a mode of bathing recommended by him: "It improves the health of the skin, inducing the other improvements on the health of the body that are well known to follow. The skin becomes at once soft and hardy. The hair becomes finer. Eruptions on the skin generally disappear. The nerves are in a better state. The catching of cold, and other ailments, by change of weather, is a rare occurrence. Happy feelings become more habitual. The necessity for alcoholic drinks, of whatever kind, is removed by the substitution of another stimulant, which lengthens life, and improves health while life lasts."

The reasons that make it so important that the clothes worn next the skin and the bed-clothes be kept scrupulously clean, will be easily inferred from what has been said. The perspiration exuding from the skin saturates them more or less, and a deposit of noxious substances accumulates on them. It is vain to cleanse the skin if it be wrapt in such substances. All body-clothes and bed-clothes, but especially those that are next the skin, should be regularly and carefully cleansed. It is no valid ob-

jection to this that it would consume time and cost trouble. The time will be far more than compensated by the benefit; and as for the trouble, why it is just one of the things that indicate a superior being that he can and does take trouble, when he knows it will be rewarded; and one of the things that dub one a poor lazy creature, that he disposes of every valuable suggestion with Mrs. McLarty's objection—"I canna be fashed."

We come now to say something of *Food*. We have seen it stated by a medical man, that *one-half* of the diseases which prey upon us are caused by the neglect or the abuse of fresh air, and *one-third* by an excess or a deficiency of food. In other words, *five-sixths* of the existing ailments of men are due to these two causes, and only *one-sixth* to all other causes put together.<sup>1</sup> Observe, it is said an *excess or a deficiency* of food. It is chiefly among the upper classes that the *excess* is met with in the matter of food proper. We have been assured by medical men that the number of ailments, both in children and in grown-up persons, produced by this cause is quite extraordinary. Food taken in too large quantities, and in too concentrated forms, and accompanied with too little physical exercise, is the

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Laws of Health, and their Correspondence with Revealed Truth.* Delivered before the Manchester City Missionaries. By Henry Browne, M.D.

great bane of aristocratic and well-to-do stomachs. They are overloaded, put out of order, and dyspepsia, with all its attendant miseries and brood of ailments, is the result. The poor man, if he knew it, has often cause to congratulate himself that he is exempt from this temptation.

It is *deficiency* of food that usually operates against the health of working men, and the deficiency may be either in quantity or in quality. For deficiency in quantity it is not easy to prescribe a remedy, at least of a direct kind. Sometimes, however, quality may make up for quantity ; and improvement of quality is not difficult to attain. It is important that food be not all of the same substance. For nourishing the different parts of the body—bone, fibre, fat—different food substances are requisite. But it is especially desirable that the food be well cooked. *Cooking* is a great help to digestion, and digestion is what turns the food to thorough account. It is easy to turn this subject into ridicule ; but there is often, as the proverb says, only a step between the sublime and the ridiculous. Bad cooking makes bad stomachs, and bad stomachs often give occasion to ill-temper, and much hard-heartedness. Therefore we wish all success to those benevolent and sagacious ladies, who, to other home-missionary undertakings, have added lessons in the art of cook-

ing. The *Missing Link* shows how valuable the hint has proved in the worst parts of London ; and we do not doubt of its efficiency and usefulness wherever it may be fairly tried.

But if ill-health is often caused by *eating*, what shall we say of *drinking* ?

Some years ago, a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to investigate the extent, causes, and consequences of the prevailing vice of intoxication among the labouring classes. Among other witnesses examined was Dr. Gordon, physician to the London Hospital. Dr. Gordon stated in evidence, that having been asked by a friend, some years before, what proportion of disease might be occasioned by ardent spirits, he replied, probably 25 per cent. of the whole. His friend hesitating to believe that the proportion could be so great, Dr. Gordon kept a record for twelve months. The result was 65 per cent. on some thousands of cases, and subsequent experience gave 75 per cent.! Other physicians add their testimony, that diseases of the brain, the liver, the heart and blood-vessels, the kidneys, the stomach, the pancreas, the bladder, the skin, etc., are ordinary effects of the use of spirits. Besides these, intemperance often gives rise to apoplexy, insanity, mental delusions, and delirium tremens. "If the thoughtless consumer or zealous

advocate of strong stimuli," says Dr. G. R. Dods, "would accompany us to a few *post-mortem* examinations of individuals who have persevered in such habits, or were called to witness, like us, the sufferings they previously endured, they would feel horrified at their own folly and ignorance, and, if they were wise, would never touch the dangerous bowl again. But whatever men may think, and however they may act, still it is true, that the use of ardent spirits, now so prevalent, is one of the greatest evils that has ever befallen the human race. It is a second curse, which seems destined completely to destroy every blossom of beauty and virtue which the first left blanched and drooping here and there upon the face of the earth."<sup>1</sup>

The effects of drunkenness are not confined to the actual drinkers. "I have observed," says Mr. Poynder, clerk of the Bridewell and Bethlehem Hospitals, "that the children of dram-drinkers are generally of diminutive size, of unhealthy appearance, and sickly constitution."<sup>2</sup> This might well be expected, not only because a feeble constitution must be communicated to them by their intemperate parents, but also because they are generally brought up amid frequent cold and hunger, nakedness and

<sup>1</sup> *Report on Drunkenness*, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> See an admirable paper on the results of intemperance, appended to the *Report on Drunkenness*, pp. 417-425.

filth. Nor are the hereditary effects of drunkenness confined to the body. The mind also is frequently affected. "The drunkard," says Dr. Browne, formerly of the Dumfries Institution for Lunatics, "not only injures and enfeebles his own nervous system, but entails mental disease upon his family. His daughters are nervous and hysterical; his sons are weak, wayward, eccentric, and sink insane under the presence of excitement, of some unforeseen exigency, or of the ordinary calls of duty. . . . Some time since, I was called upon to treat a remarkably fine boy, about sixteen years old, among whose relatives no case of derangement could be pointed out, and for whose sudden malady no cause could be assigned, except puberty and a single glass of spirits. His father, however, had been a confirmed drunkard, was subject to the *delirium* and the depression following inebriety, and died of *delirium tremens*. . . . At present I have two patients who appear to inherit a tendency to unhealthy action of the brain, from mothers addicted to drinking; and another, an idiot, whose father was a drunkard."<sup>1</sup>

Alas! how many miserable lives and early deaths must be attributed to the intemperance of parents! We hesitate not to say, that many an intemperate

<sup>1</sup> See *The Moral Statistics of Glasgow*, p. 21.  
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person, whom man's law cannot reach, has done more to deserve the doom of a MURDERER than some who have hung in chains. We may well be horror-struck when we read of the father of a family, in a sudden paroxysm of madness, seizing a knife and murdering his family; but have we not more reason to stand aghast at the conduct of the wretch who systematically feeds his depraved appetite at the expense of the health and lives of the little ones of whom God made him the guardian, but of whom strong drink has made him the destroyer?

It is a great pleasure to see "the cup that cheers but not inebrates" displacing "the star wormwood." But it were well too that the peculiar function of tea and coffee in the nourishment of our frame were borne in mind. In some slight degree they may contribute to the support of the body in general, but their peculiar office is to revive the nerves and brain. Taken in small quantities, their effect is most beneficial, especially to those whose nerves and brain are exposed to a severe strain. But taken in large quantities, and especially when taken as the principal part of the nourishment, they can only tend to stimulate the nervous system unduly, and ultimately, perhaps, undermine it. The practice cannot be recommended, said to be somewhat common among females who take little exercise, of living chiefly

upon bread and tea. Broken sleep and trembling limbs are likely to result.

Of damp, exposure to excessive cold, and insufficient clothing as causes of disease, we have not left ourselves space to say anything. We must hasten to a close by calling attention to the great goodness of God in providing, on the most liberal scale, nearly all the principal elements that contribute to the preservation of health.

Three of these are air, water, and light. Of the influence of pure air and clean water we have already spoken. The influence of light has not yet been brought to the test of equally definite facts, but the principle is fully established, that the absence of light is a cause of disease, and the presence of light a means of cure. We once had occasion to visit a young person reduced to the last stage of feebleness, and apparently at the very brink of death. So weak was she that she could scarcely articulate a whisper, and she was incapable of the slightest motion. Term-day came, and the family had to remove to another house. We laid it down as a thing undoubted that the fatigue and exposure would kill her. With fear and trembling we called, a few days after, to see if she were still alive. To our amazement, she herself met us at the door. She had begun to recover from the first hour of her occupying her new apartment.

No other explanation could be given, but that she had exchanged a very dark and dismal apartment for a light and cheerful one. God's own little-thought-of medicine had worked the cure.

While the luxuries of life are produced in but small quantities, and at far distant spots, the essentials of life are almost everywhere abundant. Abundant certainly in this country are air, water, and light. No one has to go far for any of them. But it would seem as if the indolence and folly of men had formed a league against them. If an army of jailors besieged certain houses, employing all their vigilance and energy to prevent the entrance of fresh air, and compel the inmates to breathe over and over again the impure stuff that had already done its work, they could hardly be more efficient than the ignorance and prejudices of the inmates often are now. If fresh water were as costly as champagne, and if a tax were imposed each time it were used to cleanse the person, the house, or the clothing, its use could hardly be more rare than it is in some families now. If pure light were compounded of precious stones instead of the seven colours of the rainbow, it could hardly be more a stranger in certain chambers than it is now. This ignorant and thoughtless rejection of some of the best physical gifts of heaven, is not merely a blunder against the interests of man,

it is a crime against God. No man who cherishes an enlightened gratitude to the Giver of all good can fail to be impressed with the sinfulness of tossing aside, as utterly valueless, gifts which He designs for purposes most beneficial. The supreme respect which is due to God, as well as the regard which is due to the welfare of man, alike call for penitence for the past, and amendment for the future.

It is common, among a certain class of writers, to represent physical law as all-in-all in the matter of health, and to represent any *direct* recognition of God in it as mere superstition and folly. Cholera, for example, it is often said, is no dispensation of Divine Providence; it is a dispensation of human filth and negligence and disorder. Observe the laws of nature, and such a visitation will never come. This way of putting the case is all the more dangerous that it contains a half-truth. It is true that in former times, men disregarded the laws of nature, and suffered for this, and that the duty of respecting these laws is one of the great lessons which the advanced science of the present day is teaching us. But it is not less true, that in the visitations of epidemic disease, there is an exercise of God's sovereignty. The time when such scourges are sent—the selection of many of the places to which they come—the manner in which individuals are brought into con-

tact with them—the physical laws which regulate such points as these are often so much out of sight, and so completely beyond our control, that practically the diseases appear to come to us simply at the bidding of God's sovereign will. In these respects, at all events, we are bound to honour that will, and entreat God of his mercy to spare us. Our Lord, in repelling the temptation to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, taught us that to set at defiance the great laws of nature is just to tempt the Lord our God. To set at defiance the natural laws of health, and pray God to make us strong, is to do that very thing which He deprecated so earnestly. To observe the laws of health, as far as our circumstances and regard to even higher duties permit, and at the same time avow our dependence for life and health on the will and pleasure of our Maker, and humbly implore Him to guard us and ours from the arrow that flieth by day, and from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noon-day, is to combine the two great means of preserving health, and that in the very spirit of our Lord and Master.

## CHAPTER VII.

### HOUSES *versus* HOVELS.

"For us the streets, broad built and populous,  
For them unhealthy corners, garrets dim,  
And cellars where the water-rat may swim!  
For us green paths, refreshed by frequent rain,  
For them dark alleys, where the dust lies grim!"

*Child of the Islands.*

THE problem of houses for the working classes is at once the simplest and the most difficult of social questions. To demonstrate that there ought to be better houses for them, is the easiest of all processes; to show in what manner they are to be provided in sufficient number, in sufficient size, and at practicable rents, is the most difficult. After considerable experience, we are much inclined to set down this last as an insoluble problem. If there is to be any paying of rent in the matter, we do not see a possibility of providing houses numerous enough and large enough for the whole workmen of the country. To make the problem soluble, the element of rent must be eliminated entirely. Term-day must cease to have any terrors for the working man. The dreaded visit of the landlord demanding his money

must become a thing of the past. The old Hebrew Arcadia must be brought back, when every man sat under his vine and under his fig-tree, none making him afraid.

Probably some will think that this mode of solving the problem resembles the old recipe for catching a bird by putting salt upon its tail. How are we to get houses for which no rent shall be paid? Do we propose a general seizure of house property, or a general massacre of house-agents? Or do we recommend to working men a moonlight flitting at every term, and leaving the landlord in the lurch? Our recommendation lies in a very different direction. The working man must get quit of the landlord by becoming the landlord himself. He must do, all over the country, what has been done so well at Birmingham and other places, invest his own savings in his own house. Let him do this, either with money accumulated in his earlier years, according to the plan which we have been urging so strongly, or by means of the assistance which investment societies are willing to give him. In the latter case, a few years will elapse before he can sit rent-free. But when he does enjoy the property clear, he will find it a very great advantage. The interest which he would have received for the purchase-money had it been otherwise invested, would have amounted to

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much less than the rent which he would have paid had his house belonged to another. And besides, had he not had the inducement to save money, arising from the hope of becoming proprietor of his dwelling, it is more than likely that neither capital nor interest would have existed at all.

When public attention began to be directed, some fifteen or twenty years ago, to the miserable condition of the dwellings of the people, the first and most natural impression was, that the upper classes being possessed of ample capital, should, partly as a matter of charity, and partly as a matter of business, provide the necessary dwelling-houses for the working classes. Several schemes have been started on this footing, which have proved successful enough in one way, but unsuccessful in another. They have shown what sort of erections houses for the working classes ought to be, and they have given to the working classes themselves a sample of the higher comfort which such houses afford; but they have been unsuccessful in overtaking in full the existing destitution, and unsuccessful also in inducing other capitalists to provide, at practicable rents, houses adapted to the class in view. Of late years, accordingly, it has been deeply impressed on the friends of this movement, that if ever it is to be carried to a successful conclusion, the working

classes must embark in it themselves. It is to them we now turn, and to their efforts we now trust, for remedying this great social defect. But in turning to them, it is not with the feeling with which one turns to a forlorn hope. On the contrary, it is with the strong conviction that if they will but throw their energies into this cause, and gird themselves for its accomplishment under wise and persevering leaders, success, with God's help, will be sure to crown their efforts.

In treating of this subject, let us, in the first place, state some facts regarding the influence of the ordinary kind of dwellings on the welfare of the working classes ; and thereafter notice the leading efforts that have been made to improve them, especially those which have been made by workmen themselves.

As to the influence of dwellings on the welfare of their inhabitants, the subject may be viewed in four aspects. We may consider their influence, 1<sup>st</sup>, on health ; 2<sup>d</sup>, on morality ; 3<sup>d</sup>, on social feelings and habits ; and, 4<sup>th</sup>, on their religious welfare. The facts we may bring forward are certainly not new ; but it is most desirable to lose no opportunity of giving them the widest possible circulation. It is most desirable to enlist the working classes in a sort of crusade on this subject, in order that not a

handful of officers merely, but whole regiments of rank and file may be mustered to give battle to the enemy, and bring to a triumphant issue that cause whose object is to provide not hovels but houses for the habitations of our people. We have always felt a peculiar interest in this subject, because it is here that the lot of the poor man is most painfully contrasted with that of the rich. It has been well said, that the man who dines for sixpence, and clothes himself during the year for £5, is probably as healthily fed, and as healthily clad, as if his dinner cost two guineas a day, and his dress £200 a year. But this is not the case with respect to habitation. Every increase of accommodation, from the corner of a cellar to a mansion, renders the dwelling more healthy; and to a certain extent, the size and goodness of the dwelling tend to render it more civilized. We are aware that some have exaggerated the importance of improved dwellings, fancying that nothing else was needed to regenerate the worst classes of society. We have no fancy for such an extreme. The true light in which to view the matter is this—that while the people live in filthy, ill-ventilated, crowded dwellings, huddled together like pigs, neither the efforts of the physician, nor of the magistrate, nor of the city-missionary, nor of the minister, nor of the schoolmaster, nor of the tem-

perance agent, nor of the lady-visitor, nor of any one else, can, *ordinarily*, avail to reclaim them to sobriety, or to elevate their condition. It is all, or nearly all, good labour wasted and thrown away ; whereas, if you can get them into decent, healthy, and cheerful abodes, you may work all these agencies with delightful encouragement, and with the best hopes, through the blessing of God, of rearing a sober, happy, and pious population.

1. *Influence of dwellings on health.*—It is perfectly well known that cholera, typhus, and other epidemics, commit their most fearful ravages in districts where the labouring classes are crowded in filthy and unventilated dwellings. Chest-diseases and scrofula follow much the same course. All have heard the appalling assertion, that the annual slaughter by typhus fever of persons in the vigour of life, in England and Wales, exceeds double the slaughter in the allied armies at Waterloo ! Facts here are so numerous and appalling, that one hardly knows how to select them. A very interesting volume appeared lately under the title, *Ragged Homes, and How to mend Them.* It details the energetic labours of Mrs. Bayly in “the Potteries” near Kensington,—a place which a graphic pen thus sketched in Mr. Dickens’ *Household Words* : “In a neighbourhood thickly studded with elegant villas

and mansions, viz., Bayswater and Notting Hill, in the parish of Kensington, is a plague-spot, scarcely equalled for its insalubrity by any in London ; it is called the Potteries. It comprises some seven or eight acres, with about 260 houses (if the term can be applied to such hovels), and a population of nine hundred or one thousand. The occupation of the inhabitants is principally pig-fattening. Many hundreds of pigs, ducks, and fowls are kept in an indescribable state of filth. Dogs abound, for the purpose of guarding the swine. The atmosphere is still further polluted by the process of fat-boiling. In these hovels, discontent, dirt, filth, and misery are unsurpassed by anything known even in Ireland. Water is supplied to only a small number of houses. There are foul ditches, open sewers, and defective drains, smelling most offensively, and generating large quantities of poisonous gases ; stagnant water is found at every turn ; not a drop of clean water can be obtained ; all is charged to saturation with putrescent matter. Nearly all the inhabitants look unhealthy. . . . Small-pox is ten times more fatal than in any of the surrounding districts. . . . The general death-rate varies from 40 to 60 per annum ; of these, the very large proportion of 8·5 per cent. are under five years of age. . . . The average age at death is under twelve years." Contrast this with a

healthy rural district like Rutlandshire, where the average age of the working classes at death is thirty-eight!

One is not surprised to learn that one night in September 1849, a row of houses called Crafton Terrace, distant twelve or thirteen hundred feet from the Potteries, was visited by cholera, the wind blowing directly from the Potteries. In less than a fortnight, no less than twelve persons in that terrace lost their lives by this fatal malady.

Mrs. Bayly remarks, that "the materials used in the buildings are so bad, and the workmanship so inferior, that the floors are always loose, and everything seems constantly getting out of order. We have whole streets of small six-roomed houses let out entirely to the poor; so that three families frequently live in one house. There is no outlet to the air at the back of these dwellings, either by door or by window. One long blank wall is all that is to be seen. Frequent illness prevails among the inhabitants of these streets, and I can never forget the scenes presented there during the visitation of the cholera. I cannot bear to dwell upon them, but for the sake of my subject, I must mention one case. In a small bedroom on the top floor of one of these dwellings, I found one morning that a woman and a child had died during the night;

and another woman, in the same room, though still living, appeared to be in a dying state. I shudder when I think of that room. No pen can describe its horrors. It was a close, hot morning in July; not a breath of air was stirring. The window was thrown up at the bottom; it could not be opened at the top; and as there was no draught through the house to draw the air into the room, very little relief could be obtained. The dying woman was the mother of little children, and I would have given anything to save her. The only possible expedient that suggested itself to me, was to have some of the bricks forced out of the back wall. This was done; but all was in vain. The poor mother died, surviving her husband only a few days; and the little children either cried in the street, or were cared for by a neighbour, till they were taken to the workhouse. As I left that street, I could only think of the words, 'It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.' The contrivances of men seemed so fraught with destruction, that, if it were not for the interposition of God, the consequences would be still more disastrous. I sat down as soon as I reached home, and wrote a letter to the editor of the *Times*, describing the scenes I had witnessed that morning, calling his attention particularly to the construction of these houses;

and then asked, in the bitterness of my heart, if, with all our extensive and costly paraphernalia of government, nothing could be done to stop this awful waste of comfort, health, and life. The importance of the subject at once commended itself. The narrative not only appeared, but was backed by every argument and appeal that the talented pen of the editor could bring to bear upon it. But there it ended ; no steps have been taken to make the construction of such dwellings contrary to the law of the land. Many fathers, mothers, and children have since died in these streets ; only in these cases, by lingering fever, instead of by sudden cholera. Surely the cries of distress must have ascended again and again, and have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth !”

We have given this illustration from a London district ; but we believe it would not be very difficult to match it from Edinburgh and Glasgow. It is long since Mr. Chadwick affirmed,—and probably it is scarcely less true now than then,—“ The most wretched of the stationary population of which I have been able to obtain any account, or that I have ever seen, was that which I saw, in company with Dr. Arnott and others, in the wynds of Edinburgh and Glasgow.”

2. From health, it is an easy step to consider the

bearing of houses on *Morals*. Here, at the very outset, we encounter an alarming fact. We find that houses like those in our view generate an evil influence, through which the moral character of the inhabitants is exposed to a process of sapping and mining. This lies in that feeling of *depression* which unwholesome dwellings are so apt to bring on ; in consequence of which the sinews, both of mind and body, become slack and feeble, the power of resisting temptation is impaired, and a craving for excitement is engendered. Unfortunately, wherever the working classes dwell, in our large towns, the means of indulging this craving abound on every side. We have known persons, coming from the fresh air of the country into large towns, change character with amazing rapidity, and become the prey of lusts which they had formerly little or no difficulty in subduing. The evil is not confined to dwelling-houses ; in workshops it is sometimes found in concentrated intensity. Take the following statement of Mr. Brownlow, formerly a journeyman tailor in London :—

“The state of the work-places (80 men worked in a room 16 or 18 yards long, by 7 or 8 yards wide) had a very depressing effect upon the energies ; that was the general complaint of those who came into it. Many could not stay out the hours, and went

away earlier. Those who were not accustomed to the place generally lost appetite. The natural effect of the depression was, that we had recourse to drink as a stimulant. We went into the shop at six o'clock in the morning ; but at seven o'clock, when orders for breakfast were called for, gin was called in, and the common allowance was half a quartern. At eleven o'clock, liquor was again brought in ; some took beer, some took gin again. At three o'clock, it was again brought in, and once more at five, when some took beer, and some gin, the same as in the morning. At seven o'clock the shop was closed, and then nearly all the young men went to the public-house, and also some of the others. Their wages was sixpence an hour, or thirty-six shillings a week, but at the end of the week, "very few had anything for themselves."

Besides the influence of small and unwholesome dwellings upon temperance, we have to notice their effect on *chastity*. This is a peculiarly painful and delicate subject, and it is not easy to go into the details which unfortunately exist in overwhelming variety and fulness. Here too, as in the case of the vice of drunkenness, a sapping and mining process is constantly going on. In over-crowded dwellings, the sense of delicacy, the instinct of modesty, which is at once the safeguard and the

ornament of the female character, is sadly weakened by familiarity with things that offend delicacy ; young persons become prematurely familiar with improper ideas, and perhaps addicted to vicious indulgences ; and sensual vice, sometimes of a very gross kind, is originated. The late census has brought out the appalling fact, that no fewer than a million of the people of Scotland have dwellings of but one apartment, where, obviously, in the case of families, no attempt can be made at a separation of the sexes. Like Mrs. Bayly, we instinctively exclaim, when this fact is brought before us, It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed ; it is amazing, when we consider the influence for evil of this one arrangement, that virtue and chastity survive at all.

3. Passing now to the influence of dwellings on *social feelings and habits*, although the facts here are not so startling or appalling, they are well worthy of the attention of all thoughtful minds. Those who have enjoyed the privilege of an early and happy home,—a spot with which their oldest and fondest recollections are associated, hallowed by the remembrance of a father's wisdom and a mother's tenderness, the scene of much pleasant recreation with companions, some of whom, early summoned from earth, have given still more tender associa-

tions to the place,—these may be able to form some notion of the nature and the power of the influence of a HOME. In thinking of such a home, they will be conscious that even the outward look and loveliness of the place has had a share of influence in developing domestic affections, and in promoting regard to parents, and affection for brothers and sisters, and thus strengthening the bulwarks against temptation, and supplying fresh inducements to a regular and virtuous life. But hovels are not homes. Even in hovels, it is true, warm domestic affections may be found, and sometimes are found ; but this is not through the aid of the hovel, it is in spite of it. Ordinarily, the domestic feelings are sadly damped ; the very instinct of the mother gets deadened, and brotherly affection and filial reverence are sought in vain. A rough animal coarseness takes the place of every finer and purer feeling ; and as the inmates have little or no regard for the good opinion of each other, the only principle of action that remains is for each one to do that which is right in his own eyes.

But leaving general principles, let us come to an illustrative case. We find the following in the General Sanitary Report of Mr. Chadwick, which had the merit of setting in motion much of the sanitary activity that now prevails. It describes

the case of a woman naturally disposed to active, tidy, cleanly habits. While she was a domestic servant, "her attention to personal neatness," says a lady who is my informant, "was very great; her face seemed always as if it were just washed, and, with her bright hair neatly combed underneath her snow-white cap, a smooth white apron, and her gown and handkerchief carefully put on, she used to look very comely. After a year or two, she married the serving man, who, as he was retained in his situation, was obliged to take a house as near his place as possible. The cottages in the neighbourhood were of the most wretched kind, mere hovels built of rough stones, and covered with ragged thatch; there were few even of these, so there was no choice, and they were obliged to be content with the first that was vacant, which was in the most retired situation. After they had been married about two years, I happened to be walking past one of these miserable cottages, and as the door was open, I had the curiosity to enter. I found it was the home of the servant I have been describing. But what a change had come over her! Her face was dirty, and her tangled hair hung over her eyes. Her cap, though of good materials, was ill washed and slovenly put on. Her whole dress, though apparently good and serviceable, was very untidy, and

looked dirty and slatternly ; everything, indeed, about her seemed wretched and neglected (except her little child), and she appeared very discontented. She seemed aware of the change there must be in her appearance since I had last seen her, for she immediately began to complain of her house. The wet came in at the door of the *only room*, and when it rained, through every part of the roof also, except just over the hearth-stone ; large drops fell upon her as she lay in bed, or as she was working at the window ; in short, she had found it impossible to keep things in order, so had gradually ceased to make any exertions. Her condition had been borne down by the condition of the house. Then her husband was dissatisfied with his home and with her ; his visits became less frequent, and if he had been a day-labourer, and there had been a beer-shop or a public-house, the preference of that to his home would have been inevitable, and, in the one instance, would have presented an example of a multitude of cases.

“ She was afterwards, however, removed to a new cottage, which was water-tight, and had some conveniences, and was built close to the road, which her former mistress and all her friends must constantly pass along. She soon resumed, in a great degree, her former good habits, but still there was a

little of the *dawdle* left about her—the remains of the dispiritedness caused by her former very unfavourable circumstances.”<sup>1</sup>

4. On the influence of dwellings on religious habits and feelings, we shall say but a single word. Mr. Horace Mann, in his remarks accompanying the census returns of 1851, on religious worship, observes that “one reason why many are forgetful of religious obligations is their *poverty*; or rather probably certain conditions of life which seem to be inseparable from less than moderate incomes. The scenes and associates from which the poor, however well-disposed, can never apparently escape; the vice and filth that riot in their crowded dwellings, and from which they cannot fly to any less degraded homes; what awfully effective teaching, it is said, do these supply, in opposition to the few infrequent lessons which the Christian minister or missionary, after much exertion, may impart! How feeble, it is urged, the chance, according to the course of human probabilities, with which the intermittent voice of Christianity must strive against the fearful never-ceasing eloquence of such surrounding evil! Better dwellings, therefore, for the labouring classes are suggested as a most essential aid and introduction to the labours of the Christian agent. And indeed, of

<sup>1</sup> *Sanitary Report*, p. 128.

secondary influences, few can be esteemed of greater power than this. Perhaps no slight degree of that religious character by which the English middle-classes are distinguished, is the consequence of their peculiar isolation in distinct and separate houses,—thus acquiring almost of necessity, from frequent opportunities of solitude, those habits of reflexion which cannot be exercised to the entire exclusion of religious sentiments; but certainly, however this may be, no doubt can be admitted, that a great obstruction to the progress of religion with the working class would be removed, if that condition which forbids *all* solitude, and *all* reflection were alleviated."

But now we come to grapple with the more practical aspect of our problem—What has been done, and what can be done, to meet this overwhelming evil—to provide suitable and sufficient houses for the millions of our working people?

The first efforts in this direction were those of benevolent societies, like the Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes, and the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes. The former of these has expended well nigh £100,000 in building or fitting-up several blocks of houses, but the net result has not been very satisfactory, being only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

on the total outlay. It is plain that so small a return could not induce capitalists on their own account to invest in such a scheme. The other society has expended about £40,000, but its return is still smaller than that of the Metropolitan, being but  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

More satisfactory results, as to the percentage on outlay, have been obtained in those cases where the employers of large bodies of workmen have built houses for them. Many very interesting cases of this sort might be noticed. Several of the railway companies have been active in this cause, and have no reason to regret their exertions. The Great Northern expended £21,000 on 150 cottages near Peterborough, on which they receive a return of about 6 per cent. Some English manufacturers—like Mr. Salt of Saltaire—have built whole towns, extending to several hundred houses. In 1854, Messrs. Pickford, the well-known carriers, fitted up a lodging-house for the unmarried men in their employment, and not only do the payments received cover all expenses, but there has been a great improvement in the men and boys as regards orderly conduct, cleanliness, etc. It is much to be regretted that in Scotland, or at all events in Edinburgh, there is so little to point to of this sort; there being, indeed, no outstanding case of a grand effort

by a large employer of labour to provide house accommodation for his workmen.

Although we are now convinced that the plan of a benevolent association is the least suitable of all for the accomplishment of the great object in view, yet it is gratifying to be able to say that no such association has been more successful than one in Edinburgh with which the present writer is connected, which has erected the sixty-two dwellings known as the "Pilrig Model Buildings." An excellent friend, Mr. Henry Roberts of London, who watches and reports to the National Social Science Association almost every movement of this kind, has repeatedly brought the Pilrig scheme under the notice of the Association, and at the meeting in Glasgow, in 1860, stated at full length the history and position of the undertaking. At that time only forty-four houses had been built, the total cost of which was a little above £4000, being an average of about £92 to each house. The annual rental of the whole was £303, 19s., of which a dividend of 5 per cent., less income-tax, absorbed £196, 16s. 6d.; feu-duty, fire insurance, rates and taxes, repairs and management, £76, 9s. 5d., leaving a balance of £30, 13s. 1d. for extra outlay and a sinking fund. The rents are paid quarterly in advance with the greatest regularity, and, since the commencement of the scheme,

twelve years ago, the total sum lost by non-payment of rent is under £5.

In a communication made by the present writer to Mr. Roberts on this scheme, which is printed in the Transactions of the Society for 1860, it is stated that, "as a whole, the people are decidedly superior to the ordinary working classes of the district. The houses, with their plots of grass, or tastefully laid out gardens in front, are quite inviting in appearance. The tenants, as a body, are exceedingly respectable, and some of them are persons of high Christian worth. In visiting the working classes, one has often to ascend long and dark stairs, or to descend into damp cellars, where it is felt to be a misfortune to have the sense of smell. In visiting these model-houses, the sensation is quite the opposite. . . . We cherish the hope that, through the Divine blessing, these houses may become model-buildings for the working classes in every sense of the term."

In one sense, therefore, such an association as this has been successful; but it has altogether failed in so encouraging capitalists to build houses suited for the working classes, as to secure the erection of a number corresponding to the demand. Efforts to enlarge the number of such associations have been attended with but middling success. If, therefore,

the actual destitution is to be supplied, we must look in some other direction. Happily, we do not need to look in vain. The agency on which we must rely is that of the working classes themselves, aided by the building societies, which are now so common and so useful.

The marvellous results of this agency in Birmingham and other English towns, have been set forth in a very clear and interesting manner by Mr. William Chambers, in one of his *Social Science Tracts*. It is from that tract, consisting chiefly of the report of a lecture delivered by Mr. Chambers in Edinburgh, in January 1862, that the following particulars are mainly derived.

The benefit building and benefit land societies of England were originally framed rather more than twenty years ago, for the purpose of extending the right of voting, derived from the forty shilling franchise; but the primary object may now be said to have sunk into secondary importance, the great object of these societies now being to aid the working classes in the purchase of their own dwellings. A working man desiring to achieve this, first purchases, or arranges for purchasing a plot of ground from the land society, and if he has not ready money enough to defray the whole cost of the house, he obtains an advance for this purpose from a build-

ing society, he obliging himself to pay back this advance in periodical instalments. When a workman wishes, from any cause, to dispose of his house, he usually finds no trouble in doing so ; the demand is very great, and the cost of a legal title is restricted by the society to so moderate a sum, as to furnish no great obstacle to the transaction.

The houses in and around Birmingham that are built in this manner are usually of two stories ; all are self-contained, all have gardens, usually behind, and are provided with sculleries, and other conveniences. Many of the workmen have fitted up small greenhouses in their gardens, with flues, and sloping stands for rows of flowering plants. One man, a wire-worker by trade, whose wages were often not above 13s. a week, from which he had to pay instalments to the society, made a trifle by his flowers, and boasted of having had, the year before, a splendid crop of sweet-williams. The house was a picture of comfort ; in the kitchen, flitches of bacon, cured by the wife, were suspended from the ceiling ; a couple of loaves, baked by her, were on the table ; and on the parlour-table lay a handsomely bound family bible, surrounded by other books in prose and verse. Usually the wages of the householders range from twenty to thirty shillings a week ; the fortnightly instalments are from one shilling and

threepence upwards, and the price of land and house is usually paid up in from ten to fourteen years.

The number of such houses in and around Birmingham alone is said to be from 8000 to 9000. The enthusiasm of the workmen in taking advantage of the facilities thus afforded them is exceedingly great. The price of the land for building is rather high, amounting often to £40 or £50 for a small plot of ground—a sum comparatively much larger than is usually paid (in the shape of annual feu-duty) for building-land in Scotland.

In accordance with the practice of beginning to lay up early, which we have so strongly advocated, many commence to pay in from two shillings to three shillings a fortnight, as soon as they have completed their apprenticeship; and when the time arrives for them to be married and begin housekeeping, they can almost liquidate one-half the price of a property. Before middle life, the man is rent-free, besides having a property which he can bequeath to his wife and children. An interesting case of this kind was pointed out to Mr. Chambers. It was a new and handsome dwelling, occupied by a young tradesman, just married, and who, though only twenty-two years of age, had, by an early begun course of saving, already paid for his property, and was now rent-free for life. Thus the scheme which

we began this lecture by propounding, of getting quit of rent and landlords, is seen to be anything but Utopian, if workmen will only set their shoulder to the wheel, begin early, persevere steadily, and seek the blessing of God. The total sum of money that has been paid into the societies is eleven millions, and the sum permanently invested upwards of eight millions.

The building societies, as might readily be supposed, are great helps to the cause of temperance. They give a very tangible idea of the value of money. "Ah, Tom," a member may be heard saying, as he sees a thirsty friend issue from a tavern, "I see you have been drinking a yard of land this morning." Even tobacco comes in for a share of unpopularity; not a few share the surprise said to have been expressed by King James vi., who could not understand how some of his subjects should expend great sums on "so precious a stinke."

Building societies began in Scotland; but their success there has not been at all in proportion to their success in England. They are now often called Investment Societies; most of them appear to be flourishing, and they afford to working men great facilities for the acquisition of house property. But in one important respect, their mode of operation has hitherto been different from that of the

English societies. They have not, for the most part, built new houses. They have aided in the purchase of older houses, but they have not materially added to the number of workmen's dwellings. This has arisen mainly from their not having had affiliated to them, as in England, land-societies for the purchase of suitable sites. The Co-operative Building Company of Edinburgh has made an admirable beginning, by building about 150 houses up to this time (1864). Several members of Fountainbridge Free Church have shown an example that might be widely followed, having built for their own use some 50 dwellings.

Next after their Christian good, no subject concerns the welfare of the working classes more closely than this. As cleanliness is next to godliness, so wholesome houses come next to that divine remedy for all that sin has brought into our world, that stands alone and unrivalled among the blessings offered to man. Without the possession of that remedy, even the best of houses is but a paltry and miserable thing. While we plead thus strongly for "the earthly house of the tabernacle," we must add one earnest counsel to every reader to make sure of "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HOME-SUNSHINE.

" Closer, closer, let us knit  
Hearts and hands together;  
Where our fireside comforts sit,  
In the wildest weather;  
Oh they wander wide who roam  
For the joys of life from home."

*Heart Melodies for Working People.*

" It is a sad thing for a man," as one remarks, " to pass the working part of his day with an unkind, exacting master; but still, if the workman returns at evening to a home that is his own, there is a sense of coming joy and freedom that may support him through the weary hours of labour."<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly there is, if the home be a happy one; if the scene which in returning his fancy pictures be—not a filthy room in utter confusion, a wife out of temper, and squalling rebels of children, but "the bonny blithe blink o' his ain fireside," throwing its glow on a room neat and tidy, and a family whose chief enjoyment is to welcome "father" home. With such a prospect awaiting him at the close of each working day; with the entire day of

<sup>1</sup> *Claims of Labour.*

rest spent with such a family ; with an endless life, moreover, in the distance, of whose enjoyments these peaceful hours are but the shadow, the lot of the working man, however hard in other ways, would have enjoyments for which peers and princes often sigh in vain.

The sunshine of such homes radiates, moreover, far beyond their own limits. Happy homes are among the chief causes of a prosperous country. At least, it is very certain that no country can prosper without them. God leaves communities to settle for themselves a great many things connected with their government and social arrangements, and gives his blessing with one form nearly as readily as with another. But the family constitution is a divine and indispensable arrangement, and cannot be cut and carved upon at pleasure. Suppose for a moment that it were altogether set aside, as some wise Socialists have proposed,—that there were no marriage between parents, and that the children, instead of being reared in families, were trained in hospitals and barracks, not under parents, but public officers ; suppose this *beau idéal* of centralization in full operation, what a glorious chaos we should speedily have ! It is parents, in the first instance, that God has made responsible for training children ; and in proportion as parents attend to this duty, the com-

munity will be prosperous and happy. Beyond all doubt it is to parental neglect, or to the want of proper parental nurture, that by far the larger share of the grosser crimes, as well as the smaller irregularities of the present day, is to be attributed. The number of youthful criminals is one of the most appalling signs of our times. The number of children under restraint in reformatories is very great. It is well known that in London many thousand children are trained to be thieves. Another very large class of young offenders are those degraded females who live upon the wages of iniquity. Such multitudes of youthful criminals could not exist, but for the neglect of parental duties, or at least the absence of parental care. Many of them are orphans, no doubt, the children of the work-house or of the street, who have never known a happy home. But more are the children of wicked parents, whose homes are so wretched, and whose tempers are so furious, that the children fly from them in horror. There is no doubt, too, that a large share of the other irregularities and vices of the day—intemperance, waste, vanity, violence of temper, and the like—are due to the same cause. Could we but get an efficient system of Christian family training made universal, how glorious would be the change; how little need would remain for police, and prisons, and penitentiaries, and

Magdalene asylums, and penal settlements, and hulks and scaffolds !

It is a remarkable fact that the countries in Europe where there is most disorder, are those in which the family constitution is least attended to. We refer to such countries as France, Ireland, and Spain. Home is a word hardly understood in Paris. It is not improbable that the cold-blooded atrocities that make one shudder in reading the accounts of the first French Revolution, were largely due to the early loosening of family ties, to the violence done to nature's method of making men "kindly affectionated one to another." If there be one symptom more than another fitted to create alarm for the destinies of our own country, it is the wide-spread evil of parental neglect. Whether it is right to represent it as an increasing evil, we do not know; men are very apt to think that certain evils are increasing when it is they that are bestowing increased attention upon them. Perhaps it is the increased density of the population that makes the evil bulk more largely now than formerly. But whether it be increasing or not, there is enough of it to create much anxiety. In that awful state of darkness and corruption into which the world had sunk before the coming of Christ, the "turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the

fathers," is declared to be necessary, else God would come and "smite the earth with a curse." To remove the curse, and to bring a blessing, let us work and pray for—Home-Sunshine.

The practical management of the working man's family must be mainly the charge of the working man's wife. In mere bodily exertion, her duties in a family of average size are sufficiently heavy, and she is well entitled to the sympathy of her husband, and the help of her neighbours and friends when ill-health or feeble strength make it a terrible fight for her to get through. Much need has she, too, of the help of God, not only for bodily strength to carry her burdens, but for patience to bear her trials, self-possession when her temper is crossed, the faculty of method to economize time, and get everything duly attended to, and still more for the kindness and cheerfulness that will shed a constant radiance over the dwelling, and the grace that will enable her to secure the affections and form the character of her children. The question has sometimes been put, Is a worthless father or a worthless mother the greater evil? Among the working classes especially we do not hesitate to answer, a worthless mother. Not only does she often alienate her husband from his home, but her corrupting influence on the children is more constant and more pernicious than his. In ordinary

cases, the mother's influence in forming the character of the children, whether for good or for evil, is more powerful than the father's. It was one of Napoleon's pithy remarks, What France needs for her regeneration is—mothers. Abbot relates that some years ago, a body of young men preparing for the ministry felt interested in ascertaining what proportion of their number had pious mothers. They were greatly surprised and delighted to find, that out of a hundred and twenty students, more than a hundred had been carried by a mother's prayers, and directed by a mother's counsels to the Saviour. It is wonderful what an influence the example and efforts of the mother sometimes have, years after she is dead and gone. "When I was a little child," said a good old man, "my mother used to make me kneel down beside her, and place her hand upon my head while she taught me to pray. She died when I was very young, but still, when going to do wrong, I seemed to feel her soft hand upon my head. When I grew to be a man, the thought of *that same hand* still kept me safe."<sup>1</sup> A minister records the case of

<sup>1</sup> In Mr. Clarke's *Heart-Music for Working People*, this incident is made the text of a simple poem :—

"Why gaze ye on my hoary hairs,  
Ye children young and gay?  
Your locks beneath the blast of cares  
Will bleach as white as they."

a dying profligate, whose heart would not yield to all his efforts, till, overpowered by early association, he burst into tears at the question, "Have you a mother?"

Of all monsters or abortions, known or imagined, the worst is a drunken mother. "No tongue," says one who has seen not a few of the class, "can express what the child of the drunken mother suffers. I cannot think of such misery without tears. Two wretched little children almost destitute of clothes, came to my door one bitterly cold day. The very sight of them made my children cry; and contrary to my judgment (for, alas! experience has made me wise), I allowed them to dress them in woollen

"I had a mother once, like you,  
Who o'er my pillow hung;  
Kissed from my cheek the briny dew,  
And taught my faltering tongue.

"She, when the nightly couch was spread,  
Would bow my infant knee;  
And place her hand upon my head,  
And kneeling pray for me.

"But then there came a fearful day,  
I sought my mother's bed;  
Till harsh hands tore me thence away,  
And told me she was dead.

"That eve I knelt me down in woe,  
And said a lonely prayer;  
Yet still my temples seemed to glow  
As if that hand were there.

jackets. Not many yards from the door the mother was waiting for them; she took them at once to the pawnshop, stripped the little shivering ones of the only warm garments which they had known for many a day, disposed of them for a trifle, and got drunk with the money. The next day the sufferings of one of these children were happily closed by death. I say happily, for death is the only release: a release to be desired beyond everything for the drunken mother's child. Here we must weep for the living and not for the dead."<sup>1</sup>

It is painful, says the same writer, how drink turns the kind-hearted mother into a demon. "The

" Years fled and left me childhood's joy,  
    Gay sports and pastimes dear ;  
I rose a wild and wayward boy,  
    Who scorned the curb of fear.

" Fierce passions shook me like a reed,  
    Yet ere at night I slept,  
That soft hand made my bosom bleed,  
    And down I fell, and wept.

" That hallowed touch was ne'er forgot,  
    And now, tho' time hath set  
His frosty seal upon my lot,  
    These temples feel it yet.

" And if I e'er in heaven appear,  
    A mother's holy prayer,  
A mother's hand and gentle tear,  
    That pointed to a Saviour dear,  
Hath led the wanderer there."

<sup>1</sup> *Ragged Homes.*

sound of her returning footsteps" (after a day's absence at work), "instead of being, as at first, welcomed with joy, becomes the signal for throwing the little group into unutterable dismay. Something which has gone wrong with these neglected children at once attracts the mother's notice; two or three little heads are banged violently together, another is taken up by the hair, and flung across the room; the much-needed supper is withheld, as a punishment for some misdemeanour, and in the midst of curses and blows, these wretched children are driven on to the heap of rags called their bed, where, either broken-hearted, or (according to the temperament and health of the child) with every evil passion at work in the breast, they sob themselves to sleep. An hour or two afterwards, when the mother has gone out again to drink or gossip, or is sleeping the drunkard's sleep upon the floor, I have stolen into such rooms, and stood by the heap of rags, and watched the countenances of these unwashed, uncombed, unloved, uncared-for children, in their troubled sleep. I have seen the marks of the mother's violence; I have seen the lines caused by the tears which have coursed down the cheeks of the gentler girls, and the look of defiance stamped thus early in the faces of the harder boys, and, God forgive me, if, in uncontrolled agony, I have knelt on

the dirty floor, and prayed that these injured ones might never wake again!"<sup>1</sup>

In striking contrast to such scenes, study the picture of a well-trained humble family, in the introduction to a beautiful little essay on the Sabbath, called *The Pearl of Days*. The little work was composed by a Scottish labourer's daughter, who had received scarcely any instruction but what she got from her mother. In the sketch of her life, prefixed to the essay, she gives a most interesting account of her parents, particularly her mother. It was the constant aim of this excellent woman to make home a scene of comfort and enjoyment to her family, and especially to her husband; and so far did she carry this, that she used to say that "it was disagreeable and improper to be bustling about while father was within, and when he was gone out the work must be done up." Too poor to provide schooling for her numerous family, she herself became their instructor; and her daughter relates, that "four times a day usually each of us had our short lesson; and if it be considered that the whole of the labour of the house devolved upon our mother, it will be believed that this could be no light task. Nothing, however, was allowed to interrupt our lessons; and it was no uncommon thing to see her busy at the washing-tub,

<sup>1</sup> *Mended Homes.*

while we, by turns, took our place beside her; one child would be found attending to the baby—another gathering sticks and keeping the fire alive—a third engaged in reading—and a fourth bringing water from a pure soft spring at some distance from the house—while our eldest brother assisted father in the garden.” In this well-ordered family the Sabbath was uniformly a day of bright and peculiar enjoyment; it was a well-spring of comfort and peace, that, besides its own peculiar joy, increased the relish of other blessings, and sweetened the bitterness of many trials. It may readily be conceived, that for such constant exertions as those of the parents, a strong sustaining influence was requisite; that influence was LIVING PIETY, fed amid the calm and holy exercises of a well-spent Sabbath.

Of all the outward requisites for a comfortable dwelling, none stands so high as *cleanliness*. An old proverb says, that “Cleanliness is next to godliness;” and there is much force in the statement. Cleanliness is certainly the type or emblem of godliness. No figure is more frequently used in Scripture than *cleanness* or *purity* to denote true holiness. Now, there ought to be ever a visible connexion between the type and the antitype—the emblem and the reality. We cannot say at present, that wherever there is cleanliness there is godliness, nor

even that wherever there is godliness there is cleanliness ; but unhesitatingly we say, wherever there is godliness there *ought* to be cleanliness. We can hardly conceive how any one can have a very high sense of the value of inward purity and order, and yet not be offended by outward filth and confusion. Notwithstanding this, however, and notwithstanding that the working classes in Scotland usually stand higher than those of England in intelligence and religion, our Scotch dwellings are usually far inferior to those of England in tidiness and cleanliness. No one can have travelled in England without being struck by evidences of superior taste for neat and tidy dwellings. One of her Majesty's inspectors of schools for England, in a report on the state of education in the county of Norfolk, amid sad details of the ignorance of the people, writes thus of the habits of the Norwich weavers, a class whose earnings are miserably low :—"One marked and favourable peculiarity, even amongst the poorest Norwich weavers, is their strict attention to cleanliness and decency in their dwellings—a token of self-respect, and a proof of ideas and habits, of which the severest privations in food and dress did not seem to be able to deprive them. Their rooms might be destitute of all the necessary articles of furniture ; but the few that remained were clean—the walls and staircase white-

washed—the floors carefully swept and washed—the court or alley cleared of everything offensive—the children wearing shoes and stockings, however sorry in kind, and the clothes not ragged, however incongruously patched and darned. ‘Cleanliness and propriety,’ said one man, ‘are, in spite of our poverty, the pride of Norwich people, *who would have nothing to say to dirty neighbours.*’”

Habits of order and regularity, with a stern purpose to adhere to them, will go a great way in promoting cleanliness and tidiness, even under very disadvantageous circumstances. Benjamin Franklin’s rule may be given as an excellent one, both for housekeepers to practise and to teach their children : “Do every thing at its proper time, keep every thing in its proper place, use every thing for its proper use.” It is generally with a lazy, indolent, self-indulged spirit—the spirit that is only for doing the work it fancies, and that puts off what is disagreeable till it cannot be avoided ; that lays hold of any excuse or expedient to save trouble for the moment ; that wastes time in idle gossiping or gadding about,—we say it is generally with *this* kind of spirit, that we have to connect a disorderly and disagreeable house. This spirit must be remorselessly rooted out, before comfort and order can appear in the dwelling.

The next point to which we would advert, as

connected with a comfortable and happy family, is the right management and training of the children. Certain it is that children were intended to be a blessing, not a curse ; to gladden the fireside by their lively mirth, and lessen the burdens of age—not to fill the home with misery, or bring down grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. From the manner in which some parents act towards their children, one would think that they regarded them as necessary evils, and that they had much the same view of the way to treat them as the keeper of a menagerie has of the way to treat his wild beasts—the great matter being to keep them in the cage or on the chain. We remember on one occasion speaking to the wife of a working man whose family was wild and obstreperous, on the duty of keeping up discipline among the children. "That's well done in this house," she replied promptly and emphatically, "their father gives them *awfu' leatherin's!*"

The most solemn, and at the same time the most encouraging aspect of the duty of a Christian parent is that in which his children are regarded as lent him by the Lord ; committed by God to his hands to be trained up for God. What Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother of Moses, may be held to be said by God to every Christian parent,—" Bring this child up for me, and I will pay thee thy wages."

The parent's duty is to bring up his children for God ; to bring them up as God's children ought to be. Suppose you had a king's child placed in your hands to be brought up for him, what a responsible yet honourable duty you would feel it ! How eager you would be to please the royal parent, to bring the child up as he would wish ; to have him taught and clothed and fed as a royal child should be, so that he should not disgrace his origin, but even in your humble hands, resemble the son of a king. Is it not still more responsible and honourable to bring up children for the King of kings ? How eager should every parent be to please Him who gives them to his charge ; to consider all His wishes, follow all His rules, use all His medicines, and try to train them to the feelings, the habits, and the beauties in which the children of such a King ought to excel. At best, they will but be royal children in disguise, so far as this world is concerned. It is not an outward splendour that we are to affect for them. "The King's daughter is all glorious within." The marks of their royal parentage must be on the heart, the conscience, the life, the habits. Realize this, and you will be compelled to handle your children carefully and tenderly ; you will have the feeling that a very precious charge has been committed to your hands, which you will be alarmed lest you

destroy by unskilful handling ; and should you do so, what will be your feeling when you surrender your charge, thus mutilated and ruined, to the Royal Father ? At the same time, you will feel that if the child has really been put by God into your hands to be trained for Him, you may rely on His taking a lively personal interest in the process, and giving the needed grace to renew the heart, and mature the character. When you view your family in this light, the objects that will seem to you supremely important and desirable will be very different from those which otherwise you might judge to be so. Brilliant worldly success will dwindle into a mere speck ; and purity of heart, nobility of soul, faith, hope, and charity, will assert their native and inalienable pre-eminence. How miserably mistaken are parents often as to what is truly to be desired in the progress of their families ! Excellent situations, lucrative business, wealthy marriages, conspicuous worldly position,—of how little value are such things alone, compared to victories gained over lust and greed and selfishness and ungodliness, and the formation of a character and habits suitable to a son of God ! When the day comes for giving an account of their stewardship, of how little value will be the one,—of what infinite importance the other !

It is a common error among parents to take too narrow a view of what children should be taught. Many seem to think that all that a child needs to be taught systematically is to read, write, and count; to exercise the memory by repeating hymns or chapters; and to become expert at a trade, or, in the case of females, at domestic work. But the truth is, much more should be taught. Parents should aim at teaching their children to *observe* and to *think*. For example, if a chapter be read or repeated, it should be explained in a way adapted to the children's capacity, and its bearing on their own conduct indicated, so as to exercise their thoughts, their conscience, and their feelings. One of the most vital parts of education is to train the young to right *feelings*. To get them filled with a love of what is good; to get them to admire what is honest, lovely, and of good report; and to abhor what is false, cruel, or impure—is the great master-stroke in education, which, when successful, makes the rest mere matters of detail. Yet how little is this realized! If it were generally felt, parents would be always on the alert to attain this end. Every Bible lesson would be improved for instilling into the child's heart love and admiration of the good, hatred and detestation of the vile. The sight of a man treating his horse with cruelty would be im-

proved for planting in the child's breast abhorrence of cruelty in every form. The humbling sight of a man intoxicated, suggesting a picture of the misery so produced—the broken-hearted wife, the ragged, starved children at home—would be used to lodge in the child's bosom a hearty loathing of intemperance. So would other exhibitions of vice and passion. Then, if the child should himself transgress in any of these ways, he might be appealed to very powerfully on the ground that he had often condemned in another the very thing he had done himself. But, further, a conviction of the indispensable need of the child's *heart* being affected, would stir the parents to incessant prayer for the renewing grace of God. Feeling that it belongs to God only to lodge in the corrupt heart of man true love of the good and pure—true love of Him who is Goodness and Purity—that grace would be implored, with the conviction that without it all would be lost. The habit would be acquired of asking, and depending on God's grace, in connexion with every occasion on which a good feeling was sought to be implanted. Whatever might be the immediate result, in due time such a union of prayer and pains, of diligence and devotion, would have an ample reward.

An early habit of *prompt obedience* by the children, is universally admitted to be one of the most

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important in family government; and yet it is comparatively rare. Perhaps the parent lays down a law unnecessarily strict, and has not the heart to enforce it; or he issues a threat as a mere bugbear, and then fails to inflict it; or he acts capriciously, and is indulgent or severe, not according as the child has acted, but according to his own temper or inclination at the time; or he scolds and corrects his children when out of temper himself, and without considering to what extent the children deserve correction. It cannot be too forcibly impressed on parents, that the value or efficacy of correction depends mainly on the spirit in which it is administered. If you scold or chastise your children while out of temper, you encourage them to think that it is a mere piece of revenge for a personal injury. Your furious blows, in that case, will either break their spirit or produce a thirst for revenge—they cannot nourish affectionate obedience. Perhaps there is no divine institution more grossly abused than the *rod*. Certainly there is none which demands such deliberation and courage and faith and affection to use rightly, but which is so frequently used in the excitement of passion, and therefore turned into an instrument for provoking the children to wrath. Never chastise in the heat of passion. When you have cooled down, you will feel

that you have done wrong, and some foolish indulgence you will be tempted to give, lest your child should hate you, will complete, instead of remedying the evil. It is essential to the success of parental as of kingly authority, that it be not selfish, but benevolent. In families, as elsewhere, selfishness defeats its own end. The way to hit the mark of happiness, is to aim above it. The head of a family, who regulates his domestic affairs with a selfish regard to his own comfort only, will miserably miss his aim; while he who aims at the good of all his household, will make sure of his own happiness besides. "He that saveth his life shall lose it; he that loseth his life shall save it."

To these hints let us add the importance of parents showing themselves on all occasions deeply impressed by whatever they try to press on their children. Does a mother wish her daughter to be tidy and neat? She will not attain her end by merely speaking on the subject; but if her own daily conduct testify the importance she attaches to neatness, the daughter will unconsciously imbibe the idea. So if parents wish their children to be sober, or honest, or truthful, and above all, pious, the means most adapted to the attainment of their end is to give, in their own conduct, a practical proof of the paramount importance of these things.

It is when they are accustomed to see the value and importance of such things constantly exhibited in the practice of those around them—especially those whom they esteem and love—that the children's hearts may be expected to be thoroughly impressed. No child can be expected to become a lover of truth who sees truth violated by the parents. No child can be expected to grow up with a deep sense of the importance of religion who sees no family altar, no domestic devotion, at home. It is emphatically true of parents, "If they know these things, happy are they if they *do* them."

Many other points, of great interest in the training of families, must, we find, be omitted. What we have urged is the result of a conviction, that it is possible to train up a child in the way he should go, so that when he is old he will not depart from it. We are grieved to see so many families in which the children, after being the plagues of the lives of their parents, become so many plagues to the community, and begin to propagate each so many more. We should like to see children so trained as to contribute to the cheerfulness of their parents' homes, and then become each a source of pure and salutary influence on the community.

When the father of a family is deeply impressed by such views as these, a considerable part at least

of his spare evening hours will be devoted to his family. It is utterly inexcusable in the father of a family habitually to spend his evenings from home; and it is very little better to spend them at home wholly absorbed with his own amusement—reading, perhaps, the whole time by himself, and paying no attention to his family. In the disposing of these important hours, something of systematic arrangement seems very desirable. It might be well to have an understanding, that so much of the evening shall be spent by him as the friend, guide, and companion of his family, and another portion reserved specially for his own instruction or improvement. Certainly it is most important that for family worship the hour should be fixed and regular; and, if possible, it should be an hour at which the children may regularly attend. The father of the working man from whose autobiography we made an extract in a former address, though a mere labourer, was most punctual in family as well as personal religion:—“The hardest day’s work never prevented him from having family worship at night, which consisted of a preliminary prayer, singing a psalm, reading a chapter, and giving an extempore prayer of considerable length; nor the usual early rising from having both the family prayers and his ‘private duty’ in the morning; and the wettest, windiest,

and coldest storm that ever blew in those regions, did not keep him from the meeting-house on the Sabbath, no matter what the distance might be."—(P. 7.) We may add, that the more that a parent acts, in his dealings with his children, with unre-served frankness and cordiality, and the more that he makes himself their friend and companion, so much the stronger hold will he get both of their con-fidence and their affections, and so much the easier will it be for him to train them as he would desire.

We quote a few sentences here from a remarkable work of a remarkable writer—the *Christian Nurture* of Bushnell—a book, that along with not a little that is fantastic, exaggerated, and defective, con-tains much important but neglected truth, forcibly and strikingly expressed. In considering the ques-tion, What is to be done with the *strong will* of a child? he writes as follows:—"Beginning then to lift his will in mutiny, and swell in self-asserting obstinacy, refusing to go or come, or stand, or with-hold in this or that, let there be no fight begun, or issue made with him, as if it were the true thing now to break his will, or drive him out of it by mere terrors or pains. This wilfulness or obstinacy is not so purely bad or evil as it seems. It is partly his feeling of himself and you, in which he is get-ting hold of the condition of authority, and feeling

out his limitations. No, this breaking of the child's will, to which many well-meaning parents set themselves with such instant, almost passionate resolution, is the way they take to make him a coward, or a thief, or a hypocrite, or a mean-spirited and drivelling sycophant; nothing, in fact, is more dreadful to thought than this breaking of a will, when it breaks, as it often does, the personality itself, and all highest, noblest firmness of manhood. The true problem is different; it is not to break, but to bend rather, to draw the will down or away from self-assertion toward self-devotion, to teach it the way of submitting to wise limitations, and raise it into the great and glorious liberties of a state of loyalty to God. See, then, how this is to be done. The child has no force, however stout he is in his will. Take him up, then, when the fit is upon him, carry him, stand him upon his feet, set him here or there, do just that in him which he refuses to do in himself: all this gently and kindly, as if he were capable of maintaining no issue at all. Do it again and again, as often as may be necessary. By and by, he will begin to perceive that his obstinacy is but the fussing of his weakness; till finally, as the sense of limitation comes up to the sense of law and duty, he will be found to have learned, even beforehand, the folly of mere self-assertion. And when he has

reached this point of felt obligation to obedience, it will no longer break him down to enforce his compliance, but it will even exalt into greater dignity and capacity that sublime power of self-government, by which his manhood is to be most distinguished."

In illustration of these remarks of Dr. Bushnell, let us refer to the case of Sir Fowell Buxton, one of the heroes who fought for the abolition of the slave trade. His mother was a woman of masculine understanding, great power of mind, great vigour, and very fearless. Her system of education had in it some striking features. There was little indulgence, but much liberty. The boys were free to go where they would, and do what they pleased, and her oldest son especially was allowed to assume almost the position of master in the house. But on the other hand, her authority, when exercised, was paramount over him, as over his brothers and sisters. On being asked by the mother of a large and ill-managed family, whether the revolutionary principles of the day were not making way among her boys, her reply was, "I know nothing about revolutionary principles; my rule is that imposed on the people of Boston, 'implicit obedience, unconditional submission.'" Yet the character of her son, Fowell, was not without some strong touches of wilfulness.

He has described himself in more than one of his papers, as having been in his boyhood of a "daring, violent, domineering temper." When this was remarked to his mother, "Never mind," she would say; "he is self-willed now; you will see it will turn out well in the end."<sup>1</sup> She had the good sense not to try to crush his firmness, but get it placed under the control of high principle.

The observation is sometimes made, that the most religious parents have often the worst children. The inference to be drawn from this is more frequently hinted at than expressed; it is often alluded to as a proof that religious earnestness above the average does more harm than good. As to the matter of fact, we believe it to be greatly exaggerated, as indeed most statements are which are designed to deepen prejudices against earnest religion. Still, a residuum of truth remains, and it is important to inquire how, even in exceptional cases, this is to be accounted for. It may be that there is some glaring defect or inconsistency in the character of the parent, which mars the influence of his lessons, and undermines his whole authority. Or it may be that he is over-exacting, and unwise minute in demanding obedience where some liberty should be allowed, and that thus his child is discouraged. Or

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton.*

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it may be that he is constantly complaining, never pleased, perpetually finding fault with something, and that he thus alienates the affection of his children. Or he may utterly fail to make religion winsome and genial in its aspect ; he may present it only as a system of restraint and self-denial. Or he may too exclusively aim at cultivating the *serious* side of his children's nature, to the entire neglect of that which is mirthful and humorous. Human nature does possess this twofold side, and both have been given it by God. It is an utterly unwarranted view that ascribes the serious wholly to God, and the humorous wholly to the devil. The trials and difficulties of life often crush the more cheerful and humorous side, and in old people, the serious alone remains. And then these old people forget that the young are young, that the lively and humorous element is yet strong in them ; they think they should be as grave as they are, and they denounce everything else as vanity and folly. The result is often an impatience and hatred of the parental yoke ; the first opportunity is taken to escape from it ; and the excess of seriousness which created the first prejudice against religion, remains the object of steady hatred.

Our last word on the subject of domestic management, is on the importance of *unity* on the part of

the heads of the house. Nothing can be more miserable than when the mother's efforts are neutralized by the father's example, or when the faithful discipline of the father is counteracted by the indulgent softness of the mother. It should be the most earnest aim of both parents, not only to be of one mind as to the rules and methods to be adopted in the training of their family, but to avoid giving their children the slightest reason to suppose that they are not so. It does sometimes happen that a blessing crowns the extraordinary efforts and faith of one parent, even where the other is a drag and a hindrance. But, in general, it is as unlikely that a waggon will move smoothly along while its two horses are dragging opposite ways, as that a family will be well trained where the one parent is an absolute contrast to the other. Unity in the governing powers is an all but indispensable requisite for that unity in the household which is so highly extolled in the psalm :—

“ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !

It is like the precious ointment upon the head,  
That ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard :  
That went down to the skirts of his garments ;  
As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended  
upon the mountains of Zion :  
For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for  
evermore.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### READING AND RECREATION.

"Habits for occupying the idle hour, and interesting the vacant mind,—methods for disciplining the attention, and training the understanding,—the laws at least of taste,—the elements at least of science,—the keys at least of the precious treasury of knowledge human and divine,—these we may hope to furnish to mankind at large, and they may become more valuable gifts than if we could convert them all into Miltons or Napoleons."

EARL OF CARLISLE.

AMONG the wonderful progeny of the steam-engine, cheap books hold perhaps the highest place. It is steam that has cheapened books, as it has cheapened travelling, and clothing, and a thousand other products of skill and industry. When steam labour began to be substituted for hand labour, it seemed to many a working man like the ringing of his knell. The change was doubtless attended at first with much suffering and misery to individuals, and the same thing will happen as often as methods are discovered of doing more quickly and surely by machinery, what it has hitherto been the custom to do by the hand. But in the end, society as a whole, and the masses in particular, are always benefited

by these improvements. In the matter of books they have been most signally benefited. The time was when books of the higher order were almost as far beyond their reach as a carriage or a country mansion. It is very different now. With a little care and judgment, a working man may now have as good a collection of books as an ordinary squire or professional gentleman could have had two centuries ago. The sums that many spend on snuff, tobacco, and spirits, if invested in books, would procure in a few years a library of large extent, and excellent quality. It is machinery that has made this possible. It is that same steam-engine that used to be regarded as such a mortal foe to labour and labourers. Unlike the prophet's book, this great invention has been bitter in the mouth, but sweet in the belly. In the many improvements and new enjoyments which it lays at his feet, the steam-engine is at length showing itself in its true character,—a substantial friend of the working man. In the flood of books and periodicals which it scatters freely among the masses; in the free access which it gives them to the choicest thoughts of the master spirits of other days; in the stores of information which it spreads before them; in the purifying, elevating, and transforming power which some at least of its productions are exerting on many of them, it is paying

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back with compound interest to the children, the means and the comforts which it tore from their despairing fathers.

To those who have a taste for reading, books are a source of perennial and ever fresh enjoyment.

“The place that does contain  
My books, the best companions, is to me  
A glorious court, where hourly I converse  
With the old sages and philosophers,  
And sometimes, for variety, I confer  
With kings and emperors, and weigh their counsels,  
Calling their victories, if unjustly got,  
Unto a strict account, and in my fancy  
Defacing their ill-played statutes.”

“Books,” said a learned Englishman of the eleventh century, “are masters who instruct us without rods and rules and wrath; if you go to consult them, they are never asleep; if you ask them questions, they don’t run off; if you make blunders, they don’t scold; if you are ignorant, they don’t taunt you.” This, we say, is the benefit of books to those, but only to those who have a taste for reading. And it is this that makes it such a matter of regret, that in the case of many young persons, their education is arrested before they have got a taste for reading. It is one thing to be able to read, another to enjoy reading; it is one thing to be able to spell your way painfully, step by step, through a collection

of words, hobbling along like a cripple ; another to catch the ideas as easily as you catch the colours or figures of a painting, so that reading a book becomes as pleasant as looking on a picture or hearing a story. It is much to be desired that no young person be removed from school till he can read without effort, and enjoy what he reads.

But even when there is a taste for reading, it needs to be most carefully regulated, and most conscientiously controlled. Like other good gifts, the gift of books may be perverted and abused. That enemy who can never see wheat flourishing, without scattering tares by night over the field, is ever active in turning to his own purposes of evil the swarming literature of the day. A large proportion of the cheap books and papers which solicit the patronage of the working classes, are mere chaff, with hardly a grain of solid mental food. Another section is worse —it is poison. The adulteration of food, which is one of the scandals of the age, is not confined to the nutriment of the body. It goes on fearfully in that higher department which supplies food for the mind and soul. Our purpose in this chapter is to recommend healthy food ; or more specifically, to lay down some *principles* in the first place, that may guide the working man in his choice of books ; and

then to indicate certain kinds or classes of publications which may be resorted to with profit, and pleasure too.

The objects which all readers have in view may be classed under two heads,—instruction and improvement on the one hand; and on the other, recreation and enjoyment; or to put it more shortly and familiarly, profit and pleasure. The chief thing necessary in the way of *guiding principle* on this subject will be supplied, if only it be conceded that profit should take precedence of pleasure; that the main object of readers should be instruction and improvement; and that pleasure should never be sought nor made welcome, except when it comes in company with these. By laying down this condition, the amount of pleasure to be derived from reading will be by no means lessened. On the contrary, as we shall try to bring out presently, the pleasure will be much greater—larger in amount, and purer in quality. It is surely a very reasonable thing, that improvement should take precedence of pleasure. It is a grander, nobler, higher aim to desire progress in knowledge, and the improvement of those powers and faculties that connect us with the higher orders of being, than to seek gratification for the passing hour, a mere temporary excitement that will leave no solid results behind. There is this difference, too,

between reading for pleasure and reading for profit, that if you read for mere pleasure, you will probably not get profit; but if you read for profit, you will get profit, and pleasure into the bargain. He that reads for mere pleasure is like one plucking the blossoms of an orchard; in plucking the blossoms, he enjoys their fragrance and their beauty for a passing hour; but he, of course, destroys the fruit; he that reads for improvement is like a man who waits till the fruit is ripe; in the rosy apple, the luscious peach, or the cool grape, he secures objects alike good for food and pleasant to the eye. The reading that furnishes the mind with useful and varied knowledge; that enlarges our acquaintance with the works of God and the ways of man; that sets our own minds in motion; that compels us to attend, to think, and to feel; that purifies our taste and corrects our judgment; that stimulates holy feelings—devotion to God and love to man; that nerves us for the great battle with lust and passion and self-interest; that gives tone and strength to our intellectual powers, and warmth and richness to our moral and spiritual feelings,—this is the reading that is really profitable, and no one who gives himself to it will have the slightest hesitation in saying, that the pleasure which it brings is by far the purest and the richest of any.

Let us trace for a few minutes the career of one who reads for mere pleasure. Such a reader will commonly choose the most exciting books, the books that are read with least effort, that carry the reader along without any trouble on his part, and he will not be very particular whether they have a good moral tone or not. Novels, stories, romances will be the usual staple of his reading. Now, we are far from affirming that imaginative books are in all circumstances of injurious tendency. We think, indeed, very differently. But we have no hesitation in saying that, for any one to make such books the *staple* of his reading, is very dangerous; and to devour all and sundry books of this kind that come in his way, is positively pernicious. Placing out of view for the present the better class of such books, let us look at the stories which appear in the penny journals, and in other forms in which cheap novels often solicit the patronage of the masses. These are for the most part written merely to interest and excite. The aim of the writer is commonly to take a firm hold of the imagination of his reader, and drag him along, so that he cannot stop to breathe till the end of the tale. To be able to do this is often considered a great triumph of genius, but in reality it needs but little talent. It is managed chiefly by means of three or four elements that al-

ways excite the interest and curiosity of readers—love, mystery, danger, and crime. Allow the unlimited use of these four elements, and there will not be much difficulty in constructing a tale which this sort of readers will be constrained to read. First, *Love*. A young couple are seized with a strong attachment, but obstacles apparently insurmountable rise up in their path. As the tale goes on, obstacle after obstacle arises, making matters worse and worse up to a certain point, when unexpectedly the wheel of fortune takes a new turn, and, like a spider's web, the obstacles dissolve in air. The descriptions of love are commonly mawkish and coarse, mingled with high-flown descriptions of beauty, and of intense, uncontrollable emotion, as different as possible from the unselfish feeling which is really entitled to the honourable name of love. A second element of excitement is *Mystery*. Early in the tale a singular being comes on the stage, unlike all others, acts and speaks in a mysterious, inexplicable way; holds secret meetings with other beings as strange as himself, perhaps carries on underground plots, and is on the very eve of closing, like the boa-constrictor, on some innocent and interesting young creature that has trusted him, when suddenly, in his case too, something extraordinary happens, the mask is raised, and he stands revealed in his proper colours.

A third element of interest and excitement is *Danger*. The persons in whom we are most interested are placed in situations of imminent peril. Sometimes it is danger of a physical sort ; they are all but drowned, or murdered, or shipwrecked, and it is with the greatest difficulty this danger is averted. Sometimes it is danger of a more subtle kind ; plots are laid for them ; calumnies are directed against their character ; efforts are made to undermine them with those with whom they desire most to stand well. Occasionally, but more sparingly, another element of excitement is made use of—*Crime*. Monsters of iniquity are introduced to our acquaintance ; men and women of abandoned character ; in licentious works, the veil is removed from deeds of which it is a shame even to speak ; for a time the villain carries all before him ; sometimes even the tale ends with the triumph of his villainy.

Out of such materials, a person of but slender talent has little difficulty in constructing an exciting tale ; and a great proportion of the stories and tales printed at the present day are nothing more. In some publications “the disgusting facts which have, from time to time, been brought to light and exposed in public journals, as reports from police courts, criminal trials, and the like, are cleverly dressed up, and set forth with the aid of woodcuts from the hand of some artist skilled in depicting the sensual and the

horrible ; they interest the devourer of tales, but at the same time stimulate the animal propensities of the young, the ardent, and the sensual." If you find tales with such titles as these—*Varney the Vampire, or the Feast of Blood*; *Jonathan Wild, the Thief-Taker*; *The Murder at the Old Smithy*; *Geraldine, or the Secret Assassins of the Old Stone*; *Ada, the Betrayed*; *Ela, the Outcast*; *The Mysteries of London, or of the Court of London*—you cannot be far wrong in setting them down as belonging to the pernicious class we have described.<sup>1</sup>

Such reading cannot possibly profit or improve; and all who are wise will set their faces resolutely against it. The action of such reading on the mind is just like the action of intoxicating drink on the brain. The mind is kept in a state of excitement; it is unfitted for ordinary duties; its sense of right and wrong is disturbed; it becomes sickly, nervous, unreliable. Does any one suppose that a person, whose reading is solely or mainly of this sort, will really improve under it? Will it make him a better Christian, or a more estimable member of society? Will he live more to God? Will he be more like Christ? Will it make him a more obliging neighbour, a kinder son, a more affectionate husband, a more careful father? Will it brace him with strength

<sup>1</sup> See a paper in Lord Ingestre's *Mellora*, vol. ii.

to resist temptation ? Impossible ! He will become more and more devoted to self, and neglectful of the great end of his life ; less and less able to brace his mind for any great effort of self-denying activity, or anything noble whatever ; the whole texture of his being will be loosened, his moral principles will be undermined ; his life will become careless and irregular ; or if the reader be a female, she will become fond of dress, and show, and gaiety, unfit for the duties of her station, unfit for keeping all orderly and comfortable at home ; the spirit of true love and kindness will be worn out of her being ; possibly guilt and misery will end her career.

On the other hand, consider the probable results of a love of books in the case of one whose primary object in his reading is not pleasure but improvement. We are not going to suppose that all his reading will be of a highly religious character. We do suppose that a *proportion* of his reading will be of the kind that is improving in the very highest sense of the term ; and also that he will carefully eschew everything that is either irreligious or anti-religious in its tone and tendency. But in addition to religious books, we suppose our reader to embrace others of various sorts—history, biography, travels, perhaps a little science and philosophy, with an admixture of the lighter departments—tales and

sketches, poetry and song. What effect will such reading be likely to have upon him? What effect will his *religious* reading have upon him? Will it not tend to draw his mind more to the great truths that should occupy him as an immortal being, to raise his reverence for God, and at the same time to raise his respect for himself and his respect for others, as made in God's image; may it not, too, exercise his conscience, invigorate his understanding, purify his heart, and elevate the whole aims and bearings of his life? Effects like these cannot take place without developing pleasure, any more than a change from disease to health, or from darkness and tumult to light and order. Then as to his other reading. The stores of his information will be gradually enlarging; he will be becoming more and more, as the phrase is, a well-informed man; and each addition to his information will be a source of pleasure. None but those who have felt it can understand what pleasure there is in any substantial increase to one's information. With enlarging information, the understanding will become more vigorous, and the whole nature will be improved. The avenues to enjoyment will be more numerous. The mind will retain its healthy tone, and will even become more and more healthy.

Having laid a solid foundation of acquaintance

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with the actual world, such a man will all the more enjoy an occasional flight into the ideal. Those who read *nothing* but tales feed only one faculty—the imagination. The pleasures of the imagination are exceedingly delightful, but care must be taken that the faculty be not over-wrought. A single faculty, constantly kept on the strain, becomes weary, and its exercise is at last fatiguing and oppressive. But when the other faculties are habitually exercised, and imagination is but occasionally treated with her appropriate food, the pleasure is all the greater. “When there is depth below,” it has been remarked, “well nigh any amount of general reading, of what is called light reading, may be permitted. Just as we admire and deem quite in place the glitter and *spirituelle* beauty of the foam of the waves dancing, glancing over ocean’s unfathomable abyss.” To denounce indiscriminately the higher class of imaginative books of which our literature can boast, would be to disparage some of God’s rarest gifts. Through such works the taste may be elevated, the sense of beauty cultivated, and the habit of *idealizing* acquired and improved: that is, the faculty of separating what is beautiful in actual life from what is coarse and mean, and combining these elements of beauty in perhaps purer forms than actual life ever presents.

Before proceeding to details as to what should be

read, we offer one other remark of a general kind. The very multitude of books that are now-a-days brought within our reach, create a temptation of their own. That temptation is to read, or attempt to read, too many books, and perhaps thoroughly to read none. We are tempted to gather our acquaintance with books rather through second-hand channels than by conscientiously perusing and carefully pondering the books themselves. Now, this is not to be wholly objected to ; not to be objected to in reference to many books, provided always there be some standard and favourite authors, full of thought, full of wisdom, and truth, and beauty, with whom we cultivate a much more intimate and constant acquaintance. It were a miserable mistake to suppose that as soon as we have once read a really good book we are done with it, and may lay it upon the shelf. To borrow an illustration from the gold-fields, if it be really a gold-bearing book, it cannot be supposed that the first inspection has put us in possession of all the nuggets, or at least of all the precious dust. We may be far better employed in sinking shafts here and there in places that we have formerly traversed than in traversing new districts of literature, in which, perhaps, no gold is to be found. Why, there is often not only a peculiar pleasure, but a peculiar profit in reading a second or a third time.

a work which proved advantageous to us at the first. Readers of books often commit the mistake of certain travellers. Of some travellers the whole aim seems to be to go over as much ground as possible in the shortest possible period of time. They like to crowd into a few days the excitement of "doing" the largest possible number of places, while their stay in each is so short that they can see little more of them than one does of a country rushing through it in a railway train. Now, where there is real beauty in a country, and a real appreciation of beauty in a traveller, the beauty grows upon him, as it were, the longer he gazes, the more carefully he examines. Nature does not give out all her manifold forms and aspects of beauty at the first glance. We have seen Loch-Lomond, during a day's excursion, with all the advantage of the most lovely weather. We have spent a few weeks on its banks, surveying it day after day, and instead of becoming weary, we became more and more interested; the beauty of the scenery grew upon us; we came to see how very little a portion of it one comprehends at the first glance. So also with really good books. Those books which are the products of master minds are not to be merely dipped into, not to be dismissed after a first perusal, but pondered, returned to, re-read, and, if possible, mastered. Who that has once

heard a beautiful piece of music does not love to hear it again and again, until it has fairly established itself in his soul, as it were, and become his own? We should not like to meet a person, working man though he might be, with very little time too, who had just once read Milton's *Paradise Lost*, or just once read Cowper's *Task*, or who did not feel compelled, after a first perusal of such books, to return to them, as he had opportunity, again and again, or who deemed time misspent if occupied in reading a second time what had been read once, or who, like the Athenians of old, was constantly itching after some new thing. We would be very far from seeking to repress that intellectual thirst which longs to drink from as many of the wells of knowledge as possible; but we should like to leave this conviction on the minds of readers, that *thorough acquaintance with a few good books, is better far than superficial acquaintance with many indifferent ones*; and that time is often far better spent in the company of those who once have benefited us, than in that of strangers who may promise well, but whose performance may be far below their promises.

It is now time to attempt an answer to the question, Of what sort of books should the working man's library consist?

Beyond all question the first place, in every as-

pect of the subject, should be given to *the* Book—the Bible. “Thank God for books,” was the devout exclamation of an old writer; “thank God for the Book,” is the still more earnest feeling of every Christian man. It has been well said, that “if a man had no other book in the world, that book is enough to comfort him in sorrow, direct him in difficulty, warn him in danger, and save his immortal soul; and if he had all the books in the world, without this they could neither comfort a human soul, nor save that soul.” In addition to the interest which every working man has in the grand direct object of the Bible, there are many more grounds for urging on him the earnest study of that book. The Bible teaches the true dignity and importance of man—of *every* man—as an immortal being, made in God’s image, and capable of being restored both to God’s likeness and companionship. The Bible nourishes a love of liberty. Take the Old Testament, for example. Study the history of the Israelites in Egypt. What sympathy with the oppressed, what indignation at the oppressor, does every paragraph of that history breathe! The Bible is the best of all books for exercising the powers of the mind. Never does the mind make such trial of its powers as in trying to comprehend the great truths of the Bible: God’s eternity and sovereignty, man’s free will, divine grace, re-

deeming love ; thrown back though it often is in its efforts, never is it so braced as by this exercise. The Bible is remarkable for the wonderful variety both of its matter and its manner ; now it is history, now biography ; now prayers and psalms, now type and symbol ; now familiar letters, now profound theology ; now poetry, soaring on wings of gold ; now dark but gorgeous prophecy. The Bible is alike pure and purifying. A great philosopher, Coleridge, used to say that he never knew a genuine lover of the Bible who was a vulgar man—vulgar, that is, in mind—coarse, offensive, or impure. And what is specially of interest to the working classes is this, that no book exists where the dignity of labour more clearly and convincingly appears, or where the hard working classes are regarded with more honour. In Roman history it is a striking incident when the deputies from the Senate, sent to Cincinnatus to ask him to assume the high office of Dictator, find the great man engaged in driving the plough, even though that humble occupation was a matter not of necessity but of choice. But in the Bible we often find working men with whom work was no matter of choice but of stern necessity, called from humble manual labour to the highest offices and honours of the kingdom of God. The patriarchs were all shepherds ; so were Moses and David. Gideon was

thrashing wheat when the angel summoned him; and the apostles were in their fishing-boats, mending their nets, when they were called to be princes of the kingdom of Christ. Nay, even the Incarnate One, the Eternal Son himself, was so connected with labour, that in disparagement of him, men asked, "Is not this the carpenter?" Thus time after time in the Bible are the highest honours of heaven seen descending on the heads of working men. Is it not even in this view extraordinary that any members of that class should join the infidel in ridiculing that book? For the working man to ridicule the Bible is to ridicule the charter of his rights and liberties, both for this world and for the world to come.

Besides the Bible itself, it were very desirable for all to possess something of the nature of a commentary, to help to explain its difficulties and apply its lessons. We are at a loss what to mention here, because we have the strong conviction that a good commentary on the Bible for the people is yet to be supplied. Several editions of the Bible have lately been published with short notes, for families, or for Sabbath-school teachers and others, containing much that is useful, but not nearly all that is desirable. The great difficulty is to combine brevity with depth of meaning and clearness of expression. For practical and spiritual lessons,

quaintly and often beautifully expressed, nothing can be compared to the commentary of Matthew Henry—fanciful and unreliable though he often is as an expositor. There are also commentaries where the substance of Matthew Henry and of Scott and other commentators is given. The notes of Barnes on several books of the Bible are more copious, but rather too long for ordinary readers. Much progress has been made of late years, and is still making, in scriptural exposition. It might perhaps be premature to attempt as yet a commentary for the people, where the substance of all this new light should be found. But ere many years have elapsed, it is not unreasonable to hope that a work such as we describe, of first-rate standard character, and adapted to the use of all, may issue from the press of this country.

Besides the Bible, and books designed to explain and enforce it, the library of the working man should contain some books of a religious character. In this department a chief place is surely due to the *Pilgrim's Progress* of Bunyan. To the families of working men, the works of this prince of working men should ever be dear. Selections may be made from the noble army of the early writers; from Baxter, and Flavel, from Bishop Hall and Bishop Reynolds and others, whose names are familiar to all readers. In this department of literature, new books

of considerable merit are constantly issuing both from the press of this country and from that of America. Circumstances must lead each person to determine which of these he should add to his collection, or endeavour to read ; for there are many books which one should read, though it may not be essential to possess them. A few books of this class for the young, too, are much to be desired ; and there is no department of literature where so much has been done, and done admirably and most successfully, within the last few years.

Before we leave the department of religious books, a word or two may be said regarding books on Church History. The oldest book bearing on this subject, apart from the Bible, is the writings of Josephus, the Jewish historian. In one of his works he traverses to a large extent the same field as the Old Testament, and though in some respects he is far from trustworthy, and is often given to exaggeration, he frequently supplies useful information, and it is interesting to compare his history with that of the Bible. In another book he fills up the interval between the Old Testament and New. As to General Church History, the same remark may be made as that regarding a General Commentary on the Bible. We have many Church histories for scholars, but we have not yet any general Church

history for the people. A work that would gather out from the whole field of Church history, samples at least of the gold which is often stored in it; that would bring to the surface some of the moral and spiritual excellencies that were developed in different places and times, as well as the warnings and cautions which error and its fruits supply; that would show the bearing of Christianity at different times on the various interests and concerns of men,—would unquestionably be both a great and a valuable addition to popular literature. A beginning has been made in this direction in the "History of the Church of Christ" by the Rev. Islay Burns of Dundee. The continuation of this most interesting work would be a true and high service to popular Christian literature.

When we pass from the field of religious into that of general literature, we enter upon a very wide sea, where we are apt to get bewildered, and even lost. If, however, we desiderate a chart to show the bearings and boundaries of the sea, we find it in such works as those of Chambers, or Spalding, or Collier, professedly guide-books over the whole field of English literature. Certainly there are not many of the working classes that have leisure or opportunity for anything like a systematic course of general reading. To those who have, we simply

offer two or three remarks. In the first place, it would be well to confine your reading, under this head, to the great master-spirits of British literature, both in prose and verse—the eminent classics whose names are familiar in our mouths as household words. Taste and inclination may perhaps lead you to prosecute some special department of literature—perhaps history. It is a department extremely interesting, and, when prosecuted aright, extremely profitable. But it will always be found that history is doubly interesting when you have some special object in prosecuting it. You wish perhaps to trace out in the history of your country the position of the working classes at its several periods. Or you wish to ascertain how the aristocracy and the democracy were affected towards each other. Or you desire to investigate the bearing of religion upon the state of the people, the connexion between their faith and their moral and social condition. In a very few cases, perhaps, working men may find the leisure, and get access to the books needed for such a purpose; they would then find how great is the interest which study derives from a definite aim; but in ordinary cases, they must be contented, we apprehend, with the knowledge which is derived from the more common summaries.

Among some of the working classes, natural

science has become a popular branch of study. Few things are more fitted to add to enjoyment. Natural science—whatever branch of it you take—is full of interest, full of wonders ; it cultivates the faculty of observation and of reasoning ; and, devoutly prosecuted, it strengthens and deepens the best feelings of devotion. In almost every case, it affords the means of *forming an interesting collection of objects*; and, of the secondary means of making life enjoyable, this is one of the foremost. One of the best collections of geology recently formed was that of Hugh Miller, a working man when he began to study and when he began to collect. For a collection of wild plants, your country strolls afford abundant material ; for those of the sea-shore, the beach throws its produce at your feet. It is easy to form an aquarium ; a glass vessel, with a few pieces of rock in the bottom and sea-weed adhering, filled with clear sea-water, will become the home of medusæ and star-fish, anenomes and hermit-crabs, whose fantastic motions will be a source of continual pleasure to you and to your families. A box, with a glass lid over it, filled with moss-soil, will shelter a collection of our native ferns, which, though they may not be very rare, are extremely beautiful. There are, indeed, few things more desirable than that the working classes should have more oppor-

tunity in our towns, to cultivate a taste for flowers. Could we achieve it, we should attach a garden to every working man's house.<sup>1</sup> It is touching to mark the strange devices by which in towns we see the pursuit of floriculture under difficulties.

“ And they that never pass their brick-wall bounds  
To range the fields, and fill their lungs with air  
Yet feel the burning instinct ; over head  
Suspend the crazy boxes, planted thick  
And watered duly. There the pitcher stands  
A fragment, and the spoutless tea-pot there,  
Sad witnesses, how close-pent man regrets  
The country ; with what ardour he contrives  
A peep at nature, when he can no more.”

The reading of newspapers is now very common among the working classes. Necessary though it be for every intelligent person to glance at their contents, and ably though many of their articles are written, we should never advise any one to make them the chief part of his reading. While they gratify our curiosity as to the events of the passing hour, and while they often aid us in forming opinions, and direct us as to the controversies and questions of the day, they rather dissipate than discipline our minds ; the knowledge they impart is desultory and fragmentary, and they hardly even profess to stimulate us to our most difficult and important duties.

<sup>1</sup> As is done in the Pilrig Model Buildings.

Magazines and similar periodicals have a higher aim ; but even in regard to them, a careful selection needs to be made, and a conscientious control exercised. Good instruction and good writing, combined with a high moral aim and a religious tone, form the *beau idéal* of an ordinary magazine. For Sunday reading, there are periodicals where the solid and the attractive elements are admirably blended ; and where the food provided for the young is such as may well induce them to call the Sabbath a delight.

We have joined "recreation" to "reading" in the title of this chapter, rather to denote the light in which we would have the working classes to regard reading, than as the text for a separate disquisition. Though reading, to those who have a taste for it, is, in one sense, the best of recreations, it has not the same pre-eminence in another. Recreations must be of two sorts—social as well as solitary ; and of these the social are even more important than the solitary. In recreation, most men court society. It is very seldom that children play alone, if by any means they can have companions in their sport ; and there, as in other things, the boy is father of the man. For recreation, more than anything else, we crave the brightening influence of the faces of our friends. The friction of brain upon brain, and of heart upon heart, is needed to strike out the wit and the glow

that we crave in our hours of unbending. And no theory of recreation can be satisfactory which leaves out the social element. But it is here that the greatest danger of the working man lies. It is the craving for cheerful society in his hours of relaxation that has occasioned the fall of nine-tenths of those who have become drunkards. As Burns says—

“ Social mirth and glee sit down,  
All joyous and unthinking ;  
Till quite transmogrified they’re grown  
Debauchery and drinking.”

Unquestionably, the greatest snare of the working man lies in the habit of associating intoxicating drink with all methods of social recreation. It is one of the great problems of the day, how to have, for the masses, true social recreation without intoxicating drink. The day may come when, as a general rule, they shall have such self-control as to be able, even in the presence of the tempter, to keep within safe limits. Till that day comes, the only safe rule must be, “ Touch not, taste not, handle not.”

Keep away intoxicating fire, and you may with safety enlarge the circle of social relaxations. Let the taste for music be more cultivated, and let there be more music in working men’s homes. Let there be more out-door sports, and more in-door games. As for public amusements, discrimination must be

exercised. It is too apparent, that many of our public places of amusement are, in practice, only nurseries of irregularity and vice. It is very desirable that social recreations should be of a domestic character. If HOME could but become, to both old and young, another name for a scene of refreshment and happiness, in which from time to time a few friends and their children might be asked to join, the more objectionable places of amusement would come to a discount, or would be forced to change their character. It is interesting to find what good effects on the masses the opening to them on certain nights of the week of the public industrial museums at South Kensington has had. Thousands of the working classes go there with their families, and find both pleasure and profit in examining the objects of interest that are submitted for their inspection. One of the most interesting results of this experiment has been the severance of rational social enjoyment from intoxication. A refreshment-room is on the premises, where the usual beverages are sold; but so little are they patronized, that, by a calculation of averages, each person who visited the museum had only two-and-a-half drops of wine, one-twenty-sixth drop of brandy, and ten-and-a-half drops of bottled ale.

The tavern, as a working printer remarked, in

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giving evidence on this subject to a committee of the House of Commons, is the public institution which is most patronized by the working classes. It is requisite, if the tavern is to sink, that rivals be created to the public-house, not only not of a pernicious, but of a positively elevating tendency. Refreshment rooms, where still higher attractions than those of the tavern shall be found, without its temptations, are imperatively demanded by the present age. It is hardly possible to conceive anything worse than the tavern, and the other institutions that are usually connected with it. Working men's clubs and unions, furnishing wholesome refreshment, healthy recreation, and the opportunity of social intercourse and mental and spiritual improvement to working men, are now established in many places, with encouraging results. Should society improve, the improvement will be attended by a gradual elevation of popular recreations, till at last, the Christian spirit becoming everywhere predominant, no recreation shall be sought where the Divine presence may not be enjoyed, and in their very amusements men shall learn to do all to the glory of God.

## CHAPTER X.

### HOLY REST.

" 'Tis Sabbath morn.—Thy morn, O Toil,  
The morn of morns ! Time's richest blessing,  
Is this the way to meet its smile,  
With gross debauch the brain oppressing ?  
Thou know'st 'twas given for good to man ;  
Seek'st thou to mar that glorious plan ?"

DAVID WINGATE.

EACH of the three names by which we are accustomed, more or less, to denote the day of holy rest, has a charm and beauty of its own. "SABBATH" means just rest,—that name therefore indicates a primary property of the day,—the rest-day, as opposed to the work-days; the LORD'S DAY introduces the Christian element, and places us in the Saviour's company, with our thoughts swinging between the remembrance of His great victory, and the prospect of His coming again in glory; and SUNDAY,—the day of sunshine,—may be held as denoting the result when the idea of rest, and that of fellowship with Christ are brought together—the peculiar lustre and radiance of the day—and the pre-eminent happiness and blessing which it brings.

The Divine appointment of the Sabbath is surely a

blessing of peculiar value to working men. If God had not stopped the wheels of labour for them on one day of seven, they would have had very hard work in getting them stopped for themselves. As regards the health and strength of the working classes, it has been proved, we conceive, to demonstration, that a periodical day of rest from labour is as indispensable as the interruption of toil during the night. It is about as inconsistent with experience and physiology to suppose that men could labour every day in the year in succession without impairing their health and hastening their death, as that they could work day and night without sleep. On this subject a few facts and testimonies will be useful and interesting.

During the war in the beginning of this century, it was proposed to work all Sunday in one of the royal manufactories for continuance, not for occasional service; and it was found (according to Mr. Wilberforce), that the workmen who obtained Government's consent to abstain from working on Sundays, executed more work than the others. Captain Stansbury, the leader of the United States' surveying expedition in the Salt Lake district, in his official report to the Government, bears this testimony to the value of the Sabbath: "I here beg to record, as the result of my experience, derived not

only from my present journey, but from the observation of many years spent in the performance of similar duties, that as a mere matter of pecuniary consideration, apart from all higher obligations, it is wise to keep the Sabbath. More work can be obtained from both men and animals by its observance, than where the whole seven days are uninterruptedly devoted to labour." Mr. Bagnall, an extensive iron-master, discontinued the practice of working his blast-furnaces on Sunday, and seven years after he bore his testimony thus : " We have made a larger quantity of iron than ever, and gone on in all our six iron-works much more free from accidents and interruptions than during any preceding seven years of our lives."

Lord Macaulay has said very truly :—" If the Sunday had not been observed as a day of rest, but the axe, the spade, the anvil, and the loom had been at work every day, during the last three centuries, I have not the smallest doubt that we should have been at this time a poorer people, and a less civilized people than we are. Of course, I do not mean that a man will not produce more in a week by working seven days than by working six days. But I very much doubt whether, at the end of a year, he will generally have produced more by working seven days than by working six days a week, and I

firmlly believe that, at the end of twenty years, he will have produced less by working seven days a week, than by working six days a week." As Burke remarks, "they that always labour exhaust their attention, burn out their candles, and are left in the dark."

Experience goes, moreover, to show the advantage of one day of rest in seven, above one in eight, one in nine, one in ten, or in any larger number. It may be an advantage that a day of rest, or a partial day of rest, should come in *more* frequently than this, but it cannot be an advantage that it come in less frequently. In 1794, the Revolutionary Government of France abolished the division of time into weeks, as well as the Sabbath and the worship of God, and substituted a system of *decades*, that is, nine working days succeeded by one day of rest. It is well known that this arrangement was an entire failure; the decades had to be abolished, and the week and Sunday restored. An interesting illustration of the practical working of the decades has been given by a working man in an essay, entitled *The Escape from Toil, or Workman's Weekly Refuge*. The author of that essay was employed, at one period, in a shop in Paris. He worked beside a Frenchman of extraordinary industry, who never wasted a minute. One Saturday, the Frenchman

was regretting that he could not touch his work again till Monday. His British companion remarked in joke, that he must have been far better off, and made more money, in the time of the decades. "No," said the candid Frenchman, "quite the reverse. It is true, I never allowed the Revolution to withdraw my attention from work ; on the morning of the 10th August 1792, I crossed the Tuilleries on my way to work, and did not lose ten minutes in gazing at the mangled bodies of the Swiss guards. My employment suffered very little, if at all, from the Revolution. Notwithstanding (exclaimed the man), Sunday is *the thing*, after all that has been said and done. *When there was no Sunday there was no working day.* The tenth day was not obligatory, and the workshops were not shut up. We worked whenever we liked, and sometimes more than we liked ; but not one month of the whole time did I ever make so good a bill as we do now, and did before. I was glad when the decades went to the dogs, and the weeks came round again. No, sir, Sunday for ever ! When there was no settled holiday, there was no settled or sedulous labour. I caught the infection of laziness, I suppose, in some degree, as well as the rest ; at any rate, I got less money for my time."

A well-spent Sunday is invaluable for freshen-

ing up the energies of the mind, as well as the powers of the body. What a gloomy, melancholy thing would be the mere thought of a lifetime of unbroken, unceasing, daily toil! The mere knowledge that Sunday intervenes at the end of each six days, goes far to reconcile one to a life of labour, and to keep up the spirits under it. But the actual enjoyment of a well-spent Sunday does much more; —the pleasant intercourse then enjoyed with the members of the family; and still more, the glorious fellowship which the pious workman then holds with Heaven—the delight of looking forward to his eternal condition, and seeing afar the land where there is “no more curse”—such things, while delightful in themselves, are of infinite service in giving vigour and energy to the mind. These are the fountains, provided at short intervals over our wilderness journey, from which we may draw refreshment and strength for our toils. Whatever employment needs constant activity—whatever mode of life needs constant self-denial—for that employment, and for that mode of life, nothing is so indispensable as a weekly draught from the well-spring of a hallowed Sabbath.

A well-spent Sunday promotes domestic affection. The members of the family have usually the opportunity on that day of being all together, and

of cultivating one another's acquaintance. Neatly dressed, and freed from the dirt that begrimes some of them during the week, their very appearance is better fitted to beget respect and affection. If Sunday did nothing more than encourage cleanliness, it would be an important blessing. Self-respect is greatly promoted by the workman being able to turn out of a Sunday morning with his well-dressed family, and fill his pew in the house of God. It is remarkable how closely the loss of Sabbath-keeping habits is connected with the loss of self-respect. When a man has no desire to appear decent with his children on the Sunday, it may be presumed that his self-respect is gone, and it will be no easy matter to keep him from degradation and ruin.

A well-spent Sunday furnishes moral energy against temptation and vice. The immense proportion of crimes that spring from neglect of the Sabbath, is a well-known fact. Many criminals, when under sentence of death or of transportation, have confessed that their career commenced with Sabbath desecration. The painter Hogarth, so remarkable for his minute acquaintance with human nature, in his series of pictures illustrative of "The Rake's Progress," which ends at the gallows, introduces him as an apprentice playing at marbles upon a tomb-

stone during divine service. The Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1832 to investigate the subject of Sabbath desecration, remark in their report, that "Sunday labour is generally looked upon as a degradation; and it appears in evidence, that in each trade, in proportion to its disregard of the Lord's day, is the immorality of those engaged in it." One of the witnesses examined, a respectable baker, declared, that he would hardly train up his children to the business, because he was afraid of their morals being corrupted through the Sabbath desecration required by the occupation, as practised in London. The journeymen bakers of London, amounting to eight or ten thousand, are very seldom in church; general looseness of moral principle is the consequence; from this very circumstance they feel that they are degraded; and not less from a regard to their character, than to their health, comfort, and spiritual welfare, they petitioned Parliament, in a body, to devise means for relieving them of Sunday work. Mr. Thomas, a superintendent of police, bore explicit testimony to Government: "I know from experience that persons who are in the habit of attending a place of worship are more careful in their pecuniary transactions, they are more economical in their arrangements at home, they are more

affectionate and humane, and in every respect superior beings by far than persons of contrary habits. Those who neglect a place of worship generally become idle, neglectful of their person, filthy in their habits, careless of their children, and especially careless in their pecuniary transactions."

But, highest of all, a well-spent Sunday supplies the means of preparing for Eternity. The thought of the unseen world, is not naturally a congenial one to the mind of man. He is usually glad to get rid of it, and to defer the consideration of that subject to a more convenient season. If there were no Sunday interrupting the ordinary current of his thoughts, and appealing at once to his reason, his conscience, and his heart, on the all-important subject of eternity, eternity would be forgotten and neglected. But, through the kindness of God, the weekly Sabbath comes round ; and, to the man who observes it, it brings solemn appeals and weighty lessons. If there be aught of life and fervour in the services of his sanctuary, he can hardly avoid having his attention turned to his position as a guilty, but accountable being, who has to stand in judgment before a righteous God. Meanwhile, he hears the plan of salvation told ; and a free and hearty invitation is addressed to him as a sinner. He may indeed harden his heart, and like the natural man—

who beholds his face in a glass, and going his way, forgetteth what manner of man he was—he may forget by Monday all that has been said on the Sunday, and give his heart to the world as much as if he had never heard of eternity. But, on the other hand, faith may come by hearing. The life-giving Spirit often unites himself to dead souls in the house of God ; they hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth from the grave of trespasses and sins. Quickened thus by the Spirit of God, and reconciled, through faith in the Redeemer, to the Judge of all, “the thoughts that travel to eternity” become as welcome to them as formerly they were disagreeable. Each returning Sunday brings fresh privileges and blessings. To the earnest, fervent Christian, engrossed through the week with labour, it is like a day of sunshine that visibly mellows and ripens the fruits of autumn. The more affectionate tone of his heart, his milder temper, growing disinterestedness, and ripening holiness, are fruits of the precious influence that falls upon him on the Sunday, as well as evidences to all who observe them, that God has truly blessed that day, and made it a blessing.

There are persons who will concur in a considerable part of what has now been said, but who plead for a great relaxation in the current mode of Sunday

observance, affirming that the best possible state of things would be, for people to spend the early part of the day in religious worship, and the after part in intellectual improvement and social relaxation. By this means, it is affirmed, due provision would be made for their highest moral and religious culture, while a far better and more healthy influence would be exerted on their character generally, tending especially to render them more genial, cheerful, and kindly, than if the whole day were spent in the gloomy atmosphere of a church, or under the enforced strictness of religious observance. This is a view that commends itself to many a working man, and is often followed in practice. It is therefore worth while to examine it for a few moments.

It proceeds on the assumption that there is no Divine law regulating the application of the day of rest. It does not necessarily imply that there is no Divine authority for the Sabbath (as some uncharitably allege that it does), but only that there is no Divine law requiring the application of the whole day to strictly religious purposes. The Divine law, it is said, requires simply that the day be kept free from labour; beyond that, it is lawful to employ it in any way best fitted to promote the general welfare of man.

But is there really no Divine law regulating the

application of the day of rest? To us there seems to be a very clear indication of the way in which the Sabbath should be spent, in the words,—“the seventh day is the Sabbath of *the Lord thy God*.” “The Sabbath of the Lord” must surely mean a day to be given to the Lord. It is a day to be spent in His company, a day on which the children are called into their Father’s presence, a day of which the grand distinction shall be—direct communion with Him. We grant that this direct communion cannot be continuous, cannot be carried through the whole day; but acts of direct fellowship with God should form the chief and avowed employment of the day; and the intervals should be so filled up as to aid and brace the soul for this high communion, not so as to chill its fervour, undo its earnestness, and drag it to the dust.

But wherever intellectual improvement and social relaxation are represented as entitled to divide the day of rest with religion, the idea of its being “the Sabbath of *the Lord thy God*” (as it is in the Old Testament), or “*the Lord’s day*” (as it is in the New), seems to us to be subverted. We are very certain that such a view of the Sabbath could not become current, without a great and general lowering, in the public mind, of the idea of its *sacredness*. Further, if the notion should become

prevalent that it is lawful to give the Sunday, or a part of it, to recreation, it would be impossible to prevent the parallel notion from becoming prevalent alongside of it, that it is lawful to give the Sunday, or part of it, to work. "If," remarked the *Times* newspaper, fifteen years ago, "the sacred character of the day be once obscured, there would not remain behind any influence strong enough to keep a thrifty tradesman from his counter twelve hours together." No class are more concerned than working men in the maintenance of the principle that work on Sunday is not only inexpedient, but unlawful. It is impossible to see how this conviction can be maintained, and kept in practical efficiency, unless Sunday be regarded as a sacred day, dedicated to religious duties. Admit once that it is a day for general relaxation and intellectual improvement, or that any part of it may be devoted directly to these objects, and you cannot deny to those who are disposed to use it for labour the right to do so. In fact, of the two things, labour and recreation, labour has often unquestionably the higher character, and more imperative claims; and it would be simple tyranny to allow the day to be used for the lower purpose, and to prevent or forbid its employment for the higher.

The principle of consecrating the whole Sunday

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to sacred purposes does not necessitate a cheerless and monotonous gloom. To those, indeed, who dislike all the restraints of religion, any style of Sabbath-keeping, worthy of the name, must be gloomy ; hence foreigners, accustomed to continental license, see little difference between the Sunday of London and the Sunday of Edinburgh, and think of both with about equal horror. But "being in the spirit on the Lord's day" is surely not a gloomy thing. Whatever may have been the notion two centuries ago, it is felt now, by the most earnest Christians, that it is not a gloomy, but a cheerful spirit that should be nursed and cherished then. This radiance must come mainly from within, from the heart ; but there are certain outward accessories, or physical aids to it, that are not to be despised. Fresh air and exercise may, in certain cases, be as necessary to the due and cheerful observance of the Lord's day, as clean water and wholesome food. Other influences, bracing or soothing, may be found conducive to the maintenance of that radiant, joyful temper which befits the day. No doubt men are liable to deceive themselves, and to fancy that they are resorting to such things to enable them to keep the day better, while in reality the motive may be, because they have a natural liking for them. Let every one, therefore, ever keep this question

most conscientiously before his mind,—How should I spend the Lord's day so as best to secure for myself and for others the high and holy ends for which it was instituted? And let us be always on the watch, lest the benefit we may derive to ourselves from open-air exercise or the like, be counteracted by evil done to others.

To lay down exhaustive rules on this subject is not practicable. But one rule, we believe, may be urged most earnestly on all heads of families :—Keep your children under your own eye during the whole day. Adapt yourselves to your children, try to be happy with them, and to get them to be both happy and instructed with you. But, above all things, avoid allowing them to go off, one by one, to spend Sunday, or part of it, as they please. In nine cases out of ten, your boys will get among associates that will pervert them ; and your girls, as they approach womanhood, may get on the short cut to ruin.

On these and many other grounds we rest the doctrine, that *the Sabbath is an institution of peculiar importance to the working classes*: and, in proportion to its importance, it deserves to be protected and preserved.

More especially does the cause of the Sabbath demand the best exertions of the working classes, and of all classes at the present day, in consequence

of the variety and force of the efforts that are made to apply it to secular purposes.

The worshippers of *mammon*—the lovers of money—are bitter enemies of the Sabbath, and it must be defended from them. Let it appear to them that a railway may increase its dividends by Sunday trains, or that steamers will pay better by sailing on Sunday or on Saturday night, or that they are least likely to be incommoded by the dissipation of workmen when they pay their wages on Saturday, so that the Sunday—a lost day (as they consider it) at any rate—may be spent in drinking; then, let men say what they may of the sanctity of the Sabbath, or the souls of the people, the love of money will preponderate over all. The temporal as well as the eternal interests of immortal beings are remorselessly sacrificed to this love of money. Heathen parents making their children pass through the fire to Moloch, were trifling offenders in comparison of men in a Christian land sacrificing the immortal interests of thousands for a miserable consideration of worldly profit.

And after all, even as regards the temporal object in view, the desecration of the Sabbath by work is usually mistaken policy. Taking all things into account, it is something more than a possibility that greater prosperity will result from the observance

than from the violation of the Sabbath. Such at least was the experience of that excellent man and enterprising navigator, Captain Scoresby, from whose *Sabbaths in the Arctic Regions* the following interesting statement is drawn:—

“ Though, for several of the latter voyages which I undertook to the Arctic Seas, it had been our general rule and endeavour to refrain from fishing on the Sabbath, it was not until the year 1820 that I was enabled, *undeviatingly*, to carry the principle into effect. But in the voyage of that year the principle of the sanctity of the Sabbath was not violated, as far as I am aware, by any endeavour whatever to pursue the fishery on that sacred day. Several of the harpooners—whose interest in the success of the voyage was such, that even a single large whale being captured, yielded to them an advantage of from £6 to £8 each—were, in the early part of the voyage very much dissatisfied with the rule. They considered it a great hardship that, while other ships took advantage of the seven days of the week for the furtherance of their fishing, they should be restricted to six. And as the obtaining of a full cargo was then the lot only of a very few, they reasoned, ‘ that our chance of a prosperous voyage was but six to seven when compared with that of our competitors in the fishery.’ ”

"The chief officer, however, who in the outset felt the restriction very strongly, was frequently known to remark,—'That if we, under such disadvantages, should make a successful voyage, he should then believe there indeed was something like a blessing on the observance of the Sabbath.'

"The early and middle part of the fishery referred to having proved very unproductive, our principles, towards the conclusion of the season, were put to a severe test, when, for three successive Sundays, a considerable number of fine whales most invitingly appeared around us. But, notwithstanding the great temptation to 'hungry fishermen,' we were enabled to persevere in our system of forbearance, and with a result, that all on board, I believe, considered providential.

"On the first occasion, indeed, which happened during the night, a boat—in neglect or forgetfulness of the general order—had been sent in pursuit; but it was immediately recalled when I arose, in regard to the Lord's day, and no other boat was afterwards permitted to be lowered, though an unusual number of fish from time to time were in view. The three or four following days were very unfavourable for our object, being foggy, and, for the most part, calm; but on the Wednesday, whilst the fog was yet exceedingly dense, a fine fish was struck in a crowded

'patch of ice,' and though its pursuers could have no other guidance in the chase but their mutual shouts, and the sound of the 'blowing' of the distressed animal, yet the result, notwithstanding the difficulties in the way, was unexpectedly successful, and the prize secured.

"The next Lord's day, though fish were astir, was a day of sanctified and happy repose. Early in the week, on the appearance of several whales, our efforts, put forth with augmented power, no doubt, in consequence of the restraints of the Sabbath, and furthered, I firmly believe, by Him who hath promised his blessing to them who 'call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable,' were under various anxious hazards, highly successful. Two large whales were taken on the Tuesday, and another on the Friday, yielding together a produce of the value of about £1600.

"A day of sweet and welcome repose was the succeeding Sabbath. The gale had for some time subsided; and now a genial and cloudless atmosphere cheered the spirits, whilst all nature, sparkling under the sun's bright beams, seemed to participate in the gladness. Several whales sported around us; but as far as we were concerned they were allowed a Sabbath-day's privilege to sport unmolested. The men were now accustomed to look for a blessing on Sabbath observances."

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The worshippers of *pleasure* are enemies of the Sabbath, and it must be protected from them. To please them, facilities for all kinds of recreation must be provided on Sundays; trains must be run, steamers must sail, and gardens and other places of amusement must be open. Wherever such ideas are acted upon, it must be found that the greater pleasure of the many is secured, or attempted to be secured, through the deeper degradation of the few. Such arrangements cannot be carried out without entailing Sunday labour upon men who are doomed already to six days of weekly toil. Very often it will be found that those who are thus called or wished to serve on the seventh day, are even more than ordinarily oppressed on the six; so that in place of being fit subjects for an additional burden, they are far more in need of a relaxation of that which they already bear.

The worshippers of *convenience* and *ease* are the enemies of the Sabbath, and it requires to be protected from them. Let them but fancy that it is a convenience to have railway trains, a convenience to have a delivery of letters, a convenience to have cabs on the streets or bathing machines on the shore on Sundays; in their view, that consideration alone should settle the question. The importance attached to this consideration is a painful feature of the

times. It is an indication of the sad prevalence of a spirit of selfishness among us, when men and women who have power to enforce their wishes, are so ready to sacrifice the highest interests of others merely to gratify a whim of their own.

The fourth commandment and the whole spirit of Christianity require us to do our very utmost to allow every one connected with us the full enjoyment of the day of rest. Before a master detains a servant from church; before one hires a cabman on a Sunday; before one asks the servants of a cemetery, or one's neighbours and friends, to attend at a funeral on that day—let the question be asked of conscience, Is this really necessary? Am I justified in breaking in on the Sabbath of these people? Am I doing to others what I would have them to do for me? We never yet met with the man who did not count it a hardship and an evil to be required to work on the Lord's day, except in a case of necessity clear and strong. Ask the sailors who never get a Sunday on shore—ask railway servants—ask gravediggers, or cabmen, or brewers, or bakers, or any class of men who are required to work on the Sunday; with one voice they will say, It is a hardship and an evil. It is a golden rule, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do to you." Ask no man to give up his Sunday, or part of his

Sunday, to you, unless you would be ready to give up the same to him. The first commandment of the law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" and the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." No man loves his neighbour as himself who deprives him of his Sunday, but refuses to surrender his own.

In conclusion, we cannot express a better wish for our working friends, than that they may all know, in the highest sense, the blessings of a holy Sabbath. As often as it returns, may it carry their thoughts back to a risen Saviour, a completed redemption, the conquest of death, and the spoiling of the grave; may it carry them forward to a joyful resurrection, and an eternal life, to be spent amid the rest that remaineth for the people of God !





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